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# Arafat to US: 'Self-Determination for 242'

PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat says he is willing to conditionally accept UN Resolution 242, according to an interview he had May 14 with *The Washington Post*. Arafat declared an unambiguous "Yes and absolutely" to the resolution, on the condition that the US recognises the Palestinians' right to self-determination.

"We are not refusing 242 because it is a resolution," said Arafat. "We are refusing 242 because it doesn't treat us as a people." Concerning recognition of Israel's right to exist, Arafat said, "I will accept all the international legality. It is very clear what I am saying. Simple and clear."

The PLO leader said he worked for two years to conclude the February 11 agreement with Jordan. "It wasn't a joke. It is very important and a very concrete agreement," he said, but complained "for years we were told that as soon as you have this [agreement with Jordan-ed], this will facilitate everything. Then we have it, and it has done nothing. Why?" Arafat said the reason there has not been an American move towards the PLO as a result of the Jordanian-PLO agreement is because of "American-Israeli ties."

Since all permanent members in the UN Security Council, except for the US, have explicitly recognised the Palestinians' right to self-determination, then 242 will be amended *de facto* to a version acceptable by the Palestinians if the US agrees to Arafat's conditions. Such an amendment was actually sponsored by the French and Egyptian governments in the summer of 1982, but had to be withdrawn after the US rejected the proposal. It was also suggested in 1977 for the Geneva conference.

Palestinians in the occupied territories reacted to Arafat's statement by asserting that the US position is the main obstacle to peace. Ziad Abu Ziad, a Jerusalem attorney who met twice with special US envoy Richard Murphy, told *Al Fajr* that "if Arafat's statements are true, they show Arafat's good will. It is now the US's turn to show if it has good will towards peace. Bashir Barghouthi, editor of *Al Tali'a* weekly, said that he wasn't surprised by Arafat's statement since that position was evident in the February 11 Amman agreement between the PLO and Jordan. Barghouthi believes that the US will continue to demand concessions and that the American understanding of the right to self-determination is very elastic. Barghouthi said the Palestinians should stop expecting anything from the US.

In Washington, US State Department officials declined to say much on Arafat's statement. Deputy spokesperson Edward Djerejian said that "the US position on self-determination is well known." The official reiterated US rejection of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and said that any agreement on the status of the West Bank and Gaza must have the prior consent of the inhabitants of the occupied territories.

## Teachers Threaten to Escalate Strike

The General Committee of Government School Teachers (GCGST) in the West Bank agreed to give the Israeli military officer in charge of education until May 17 to prove that he will abide by a promise he made May 7 to increase salaries of teachers at government schools in the West Bank. Otherwise, the GCGST said, it will be forced to escalate its protest action which it started May 7 with a partial strike for two class periods.

In a letter dated May 10 and addressed to the Israeli education officer, the GCGST said: "You promised us following the protest strike to raise our salaries and improve our conditions in a period not exceeding 10 days. We are therefore waiting for you to implement this promise. If you do not do so within the specified time, we will find ourselves obliged to take further protest measures."

The education officer visited some of the GCGST members May 7, a few hours before the partial strike was scheduled to go into effect, and asked them to call off the strike, in return for which he would meet some of their demands. The strike however, went on as scheduled and most West Bank cities reported a high rate of participation. The GCGST established in 1980, is not officially recognised by the Israeli government even though it has more than 8000 members and is the only organisation in the occupied West Bank

*continued on page 13*

## Prisoners Launch Strikes in Tulkarm, Hebron

Deteriorating conditions in West Bank prisons prompted another round of hunger strikes in the Tulkarm and Hebron security prisons this week.

In Hebron an incident May 10 between a jailer and a Palestinian political prisoner started a wave of clashes, ending in a general protest strike by the prisoners. An Israeli jailer is accused of beating one of the political prisoners for no reason. The prisoners reportedly attacked the jailer in response, which led to more confrontation.

The nearly 250 prisoners in the Hebron lock-up then called for a hunger strike to protest jailers' treatment of prisoners and conditions in general. According to Palestinian lawyers, the prisoners are complaining of very bad conditions. These include not having water for washing or showers since May 7, unsatisfactory medical treatment, presence of flies in the cells because of failure to spray the facilities, and a shortage of transistor radios (only 12 radios are available for all the prisoners). They also complained that the prison administration had promised to implement improvements two years ago but had failed to do so.

It is not known whether the hunger strike is still on or what form it is taking.

Relatives of political prisoners in the newly-reopened Tulkarm detention centre said they believed a hunger strike had been called for, to protest bad treatment. Detainees also told lawyer Fathi Shbeiteh that 20 prisoners are crowded into one cell intended for seven. They also complained that the food is rotten and mouldy, and that they have to salute jailers as they pass by.

The detainees protested the measures to the new prison's administrator, who refused to meet with them unless they agreed to salute the jailers as ordered. When the detainees refused to comply, the administration retaliated by reducing food rations, preventing prisoners from taking showers, stopping delivery of books and games brought by the Red Cross, preventing entry of radios into cells and cutting family visits to once-monthly instead of bi-monthly. It is believed that the detainees then called a hunger strike in protest.

One of the detainees, Yousef Raja, 16, told Shbeiteh he was handcuffed for two days and beaten on his head by a jailer known as "Ofer." Two others, Zakaria Ismael Abu Samn and Tareq Mohammed Abd al-

*continued on page 13*

IN THIS ISSUE

Image of Arabs in Israel ..... p.2
Khalaf Memorial ..... p.3
American-Arab Relations ..... pp.6&7
St John's Battles Blindness ..... pp.8&9
What Every 'Fact-Finding' Delegatio.. Should Know ..... p.16

**Mourners and search groups after the 200 kilogram bomb exploded in a populated West Beirut district.**

# CIA Sponsored Lebanese Hit Team

The American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was indirectly responsible for the massive car-bombing last March in a busy Shi'ite suburb of Beirut, which killed 80 civilians and wounded 200, according to a front-page report in *The Washington Post* May 12.

The report stated that the CIA established, with the approval of US President Ronald Reagan, several terrorist teams of Lebanese and other non-Americans for the purpose of detecting planned attacks on US targets in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East. The teams were intended to carry out pre-emptive strikes against any would-be attackers. One of these teams planted the car bomb in Beirut with the purpose of murdering prominent Shi'ite leader Mohammed Fadlallah, an outspoken critic of American policy in the Middle East. The bomb exploded, killing innocent bystanders and missing its target.

*The Washington Post* report suggests, however, that the team trained by the CIA planted the bomb without Agency authorisation. An editorial in the same paper May 14 questioned the possibility of the team acting alone, saying that "one wonders whether the killers really felt that they were unauthorised to carry out the bombing."

"Faced with an indirect connection to the car-bombing, alarmed CIA and Reagan administration officials quickly cancelled the entire covert support operation," the report said. It added that the CIA was "upset that one of its most secret and much debated operations had gone astray."

In its editorial May 14, *The Washington Times* placed blame for the mass murder in Beirut on Reagan himself, saying, "President Reagan is said to have ordered the CIA to put together the counter-terrorist force in Lebanon with the assignment: get them before they get us." the editorial said that "setting off a bomb in a city is a sure way to kill innocent bystanders, which the US hasn't much stomach for."

# DFPE Gains Ground in Histadrut Elections

The Israeli Labour Party expanded its control over the Israeli Labour Federation (Histadrut) following the May 13 union elections. However, the Labour Party lost ground among Arab voters in more than 46 Arab communities inside the "green line."

The Labour Party won 66.7 percent, Likud 21.4 percent, the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality 4 percent, Citizens Rights Movement 2.7 percent, the Progressive List for Peace 1.2 percent, and the Tehiya Party 1.9 percent. A minimum of 2 percent of the vote is required for a party to obtain Histadrut representation.

In the previous elections in 1981, Labour took 61.9 percent, Likud 26.3 percent, and the DFPE 3.5 percent.

The Labour Party, which has always had a majority in labour councils in Arab communities, lost that majority to the DFPE, whose members were still celebrating what they termed a major victory three days after the elections. Labour lost ground to the DFPE in Nazareth, Taibeh, Sakhnin, Kufr Kanna, and 42 other Arab communities inside the "green line." The DFPE received more than 50 percent of the Arab vote in 22 communities and 30 percent in 24 others. The DFPE also received more Jewish votes than last year in major cities like Tel Aviv and in several kibbutzim.

The DFPE spokesperson in Tel Aviv, Uzi Burstein, told *Al Fajr* that his party is "overjoyed" about the results. He said the fact that the party received more Arab votes than any other party proves that Arabs inside the "green line" are "more aware and more politically educated, having realised through past experience that Israeli Zionist parties will never work for the benefit of Arabs."

# Arab Image in Israeli Texts Abysmal

**The image of the Palestinian Arab in Israeli literature is inferior to the Israeli and is depicted at the lowest possible level. So concluded Ummayeh Khatib, a graduate student at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and well-known author Salman Natour from Daliat al-Karmel near Haifa, in their May 10 lecture on the "Image of the Arab in Hebrew Literature." This was supported by a new study conducted by Professor Daniel Bar-Tal of Tel Aviv University, who found that the bulk of references to Arabs in Israeli textbooks are negative.**

About 30 people attended the lecture, sponsored by the Union of Palestinian Writers in the Occupied Territories. It was held at the Professional Unions headquarters in Beit Hanina, a Jerusalem neighbourhood.

Khatib told the audience that Binyamin Kelman of Hebrew University conducted five surveys of Jewish elementary and high school students between 1965 and 1983 to assess their image of Arabs. The students were given a list of characteristics and asked to rate each as they applied to the Arab and the Jew. The Arab persistently received low points on positive characteristics and high points on negative characteristics, while the opposite held true for the Jew.

The first study was conducted in 1965. The Arab scored below average on all positive characteristics except two, masculine and warm, while the Jew scored much above average. The Arab was considered ugly, criminal, emotional, unstable, weak, negative, inconsiderate, unappreciative, dirty, and much more, Khatib said.

The second study was done in 1968, a year after the June 1967 war in which Israel defeated three Arab states and occupied the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights. In this survey the Arab was no longer perceived even as warm and masculine.

The third survey was done in 1974. The 1973 Arab-Israeli war seemed to have added some points to the Arab's image but still the Arab rated only average or just below that on most character traits, according to Khatib. In the fourth survey, conducted in 1979 following the Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel, the results were not much different from the 1974 survey. The same was true for the fifth survey, which was conducted in 1983, but has not been published yet, Khatib said.

The 1979 survey differentiated between the Egyptians, Syrians, Palestinians inside Israel, the Palestinians in the occupied territories, and Palestinians in exile. The Egyptians received the highest rating, followed by the Palestinians inside Israel, the Syrians, and the rest of the Palestinians.

Khatib explained that "the negative image of Arabs is primarily a reflection of the textbooks Jewish students use." She said the books used in reading courses stress two things: first, that the Jews worldwide have been persecuted and badly treated — therefore they are justified in seeking revenge; and second, that other peoples, especially the Arabs, are worthy of less respect. The Arab is treated as sub-human.

> ARABS ARE CONSIDERED UGLY, CRIMINAL, EMOTIONAL, UNSTABLE, WEAK, NEGATIVE INCONSIDERATE, UNAPPRECIATIVE AND MUCH MORE...
>
> — SURVEY RESULTS

The Arab, she said, is always depicted a the "enemy." He is mean, greedy, criminal, and untrustworthy. The Palestinian refugees are the Arabs who either "fled" the country in 1948, encouraged by their leaders, or "preferred" to leave of their own will. The textbooks do not assign any responsibility to the Zionist movement for displacement of the refugees, Khatib said. As for the Arab-Israeli conflict, it is always portrayed as a struggle between the "developed and civilised" Jewish society and the "backward" Arabs. The Arabs are always presented as the agressors who disturb Israel's peaceful living.

Salman Natour echoed Khatib's points and added that Israeli literature is no less guilty of painting a bad picture of the Arab. Natour used a recent Israeli novel called *Nadia* as an example. In the book, the protagonist, Nadia, is an Arab girl from the Galilee who, in high school, decides to go to a Jewish school. The book then talks about Nadia's struggle with her village friends and within herself over coexistence with the Jews.

Natour criticised the novel for presenting the image of a backward Arab village and people who refuse to learn form advanced and progressive Jews. Through the words of Nadia, Natour said, the novel draws a bad image of the Arabs, making them look anti-Semitic, while Nadia's classmates and teachers try all the time to help her cope with the changes in her life and encourage her to continue studying to become a doctor and go back and help her "village people."

Results of another survey of Israeli textbooks conducted by Tel Aviv University professor Daniel Bar-Tal and released this week showed that 50 percent of the school books approved by the Israeli Ministry of Education which mention the Arabs draw a negative image of the Arab. Only 17 percent of these show the Arab in a positive light, while 33 percent are neutral. According to the survey, the books which mention the Arab most are taught between the fourth and seventh grades. Ummayeh Khatib said the image of the "good" Arab is one who cooperates with the authorities against his own people, who denies his heritage, and identifies more with Jewish history and culture.

The Tel Aviv University survey also found that official religious schools teach the most pejorative ideas about Arabs. One example from a *yeshiva* text taught in the sixth grade says: "Suddenly gunfire was heard, awakening people and killing others in the midst of darkness when the person becomes evil. Then gangsters from the children of Hagar (the Arabs) come like thieves and mercenaries, stealing and looting whatever they can yet their hands on. The giant Palestinians come prepared to begin evil things and plotting to eradicate Israel."

# Udi Adiv Freed on Parole

Udi Adiv, an Israeli convicted 13 years ago of spying for Syria, was paroled May 14 after serving two-thirds of his 17-year term.

Adiv, 40, a resident of Kibbutz Gan Shmuel, was convicted by a Haifa district court in December 1972 of travelling to Syria where he tried to meet PLO leaders. Three Arab and four other Jewish members of the group were also convicted at the time, but Adiv received the harshest sentence because he was the leader.

Shortly after his parole hearing, which recommended release for good behaviour, Adiv left the prison to meet his family and fiancee Lea Leshem of Tel Aviv. Adiv told the reporters who besieged him as he left jail that he only wants to go home, rest, and "make a family."

Adiv was released on the condition that he stay clear of political involvement and remain either on his kibbutz or at his fiancee's residence until the prison term ends.

While in prison, Adiv refused to be separated from Palestinian political prisoners and rejected various deals the Israeli government offered him to secure his release. Thousands of Israelis, including Knesset members, signed a petition requesting his release. Israeli President Chaim Herzog refused to grant Adiv amnesty last year because the General Security Service was opposed to the idea.

**Udi Adiv with fiancee Lea Leshem**

# Court Sentences Boy, 16, For 10-Year-Old Incident

Hebron resident Mohammed Idris Badawi, 16, was sentenced May 8 by a Ramallah military court to either a IS300,000 fine or a two-month prison term for throwing stones in Hebron 10 years ago when he was only six years old.

According to Badawi's father, Abd al-Rahim, a military patrol arrested his son last month on April 23 with no explanation. He said that 18 days later he received a court notice informing him that his son had been sentenced to a two-month jail term or IS300,000 fine on charges of stoning Israeli soldiers when he was six years old. Abd al-Rahim paid the fine and won his son's release.

Asked why he did not hire a lawyer to defend his son, Abd al-Rahim said he was never even informed of the day the court was in session. He first knew of the court decision from the notice he received. He said Badawi was told while in detention that he was to be charged with throwing stones 10 years ago. Badawi said he doesn't remember throwing stones, adding that even if he had, he was only a child at the time.

Advocate Jonathan Kuttab told *Al Fajr* the sentencing is illegal. Citing Military Order 132, Kuttab said that no child under 12 years of age guilty of an offense can be held in detention or put on trial. Since Badawi was under the age of 12 when the incident occurred, his trial and sentencing are illegal.

Badawi's arrest took place 45 days after his 16th birthday and only three days after he had received his Israeli ID card. Sixteen is the legal age for obtaining an Israeli identity card.

# Muhtadi: 'No Valid Grounds to Close Hospice'

"Israeli measures against Hospice Hospital in the Old City of Jerusalem contradict statements by Israeli officials that call for improvement of the quality of life in occupied Arab territory," read a May 14 statement by the Committee to Save the Hospice Hospital and the Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University.

The statement, made during a press conference May 14 at the West Jerusalem press centre Beit Agron, said the US$991,000 allocated last year is not enough to cover hospital needs and allow it to adequately serve a population of 150,000. The hospital needs US$500,000 over the coming two years in order to upgrade its services, the statement said.

Speakers at the press conference, including hospital director Dr Ahmad Muhtadi and other Israeli and Arab physicians, agreed that Israeli health officials do not have valid grounds to close the Hospice since its staff are professionally qualified and the hospital is rendering a much needed service to the Arab residents of the Old City.

Ismael Taziz, secretary of the Pharmaceutical Union in the West Bank and chairman of the Friends of the Hospice Committee, recounted the history of Israeli closures of health centres in Arab areas. He said the Israelis have taken over a building in Sheikh Jarrah intended to house a central hospital, reduced services at the Hospice, closed the Tuberculosis Centre, the Blood Bank, the Central Laboratory, and finally prevented the Red Crescent Hospital in Jerusalem from expanding.

Taziz also said Israeli officials refused to allow a children's hospital or a health centre to be built on Muslim *waqf* land to serve the poor population of Jerusalem.

Taziz asked the Israeli government to abide by international agreements regarding the status of citizens under occupation and to improve medical services in a way acceptable to the local population.

The Hospice is the only government hospital in the Arab part of Jerusalem. It has been under threat of closure by the Israeli Health Ministry for many years now but Israeli attempts were thwarted by local and international pressure. Although the government claims the closure is intended to reduce government expenses, it rejected offers by Hospice administrators and benefactors to turn the Hospice into a private hospital with its own budget.

Beit Agron press conference in solidarity with the Hospice.

Mohammed Faqeh, head of the BZU board of trustees, eulogising Khalaf/AO Photo

# Palestinians Commemorate Khalaf

Nearly a thousand Palestinians representing local municipalities, universities, political parties, churches and charitable societies met May 9 at the Chamber of Commerce to pay tribute to Karim Khalaf on the 40th day after his unexpected death. Khalaf, elected mayor of Ramallah in 1976 and deposed by the Israelis in 1982, died of a heart attack in Jericho on March 30. He was 51 years old.

The main theme of the speeches and eulogies was the call for national unity among the Palestinians at home and in the diaspora.

Reverend Odeh Rantisi, deputy mayor of Ramallah during Khalaf's seven years in office, said that Khalaf's departure left a political void and vowed in Khalaf's name, "We will continue on your path until the Palestinian people get their independence and freedom."

Ibrahim Dakkak, head of the West Bank Engineers Union, observed that Khalaf died on Land Day and is being commemorated on the 40th anniversary of the victory over fascism and the end of World War II in Europe. Dakkak called on Palestinians to unite on the basis of the Aden-Algiers agreement. Gaza advocate Fayez Abu Rahmeh called Khalaf a "jewel" and said, "He believed in the justice of the Palestinian cause and worked continuously for it."

The highlight of the memorial was the improvised speech given by the deposed mayor of Nablus, Bassam Shaka'a. Shaka'a and Khalaf were both victims of car-bombs planted by the Jewish terror underground in 1980. Shaka'a, who stood on the podium with the help of two canes, called Khalaf "my brother in struggle, my brother in blood, my brother in suffering, and my brother in the future." Shaka'a made an emotional appeal for unity among the Palestinians and among PLO leaders. He said that "PLO leaders shouldn't solve Israel's contradictions by creating Palestinian and Arab contradictions."

Nazareth Mayor Tawfiq Zayyad echoed Shaka'a's appeal for Palestinian unity and for opposing what he called "the American-Israeli conspiracy against the Palestinians." Zayyad called on residents of the occupied territories to follow the example of Palestinians who stayed in their homes in 1948. He said that the struggle of Palestinians living in Israel centres on the theme, "We would rather die than leave." Zayyad also praised Khalaf as "a first-rate leader," and said that the people of Nazareth hold a special love for Khalaf.

Deposed Mayor of al-Bireh Ibrahim Tawil said that since the 1976 elections he and Khalaf had been twin mayors of the twin cities. Tawil called for a re-evaluation of the overall Palestinian situation and for a correct and strong unity in the PLO, as Khalaf would have wanted.

Khalaf's daughter Vivian spoke on behalf of the Khalaf family, thanking all those who came to remember Karim. "Your presence here is a sign of the Palestinian people's love for my father," she said. Vivian Khalaf announced the establishment of a Karim Khalaf Fund sponsored by the family.

Other speakers at the commemoration included: Dr Sa'ad Faqeh, head of the Bir Zeit Board of Trustees; Fadl Rimawi, spokesperson of the government teachers committee; Marwan Barghouthi, president of the Bir Zeit Student Council; and Fawzi Abdullah, editor of *Al Mawakeb* literary magazine. Poets Issam Abassi, Munib Makhoul, and Jamal Salsa' delivered poems about Khalaf.

After Two Years

# Dheisheh's Main Entrance Re-Opened

The Israeli military authorities opened the main entrance to the Dheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem May 9. It was closed in June, 1983. The entrance is one of 19 that have been successively closed since 1981. Its closure was soon to be reviewed by the Israeli High Court.

Twenty shopowners who lost their businesses when access to the main road was blocked by concrete barrels appealed to the Israeli High Court one year ago. The court had earlier recommended that an entrance to the camp must be kept open. The authorities opened a small side entrance but later closed it after stones were thrown at Gush Emunim leader Rabbi Moshe Levinger during his three-month stake-out at the camp last fall.

Hundreds of Dheisheh residents crowded near the camp entrance while the bulldozers were at work opening the entrance. Israeli troops and local police kept them from getting too close to the entrance. Hassan Mana'a, a Dheisheh resident and one of the 20 merchants who appealed to the Israeli High Court, told *Al Fajr* that the opening of the entrance was a "patriotic accomplishment." Mana'a said that camp residents have long been complaining to journalists and politicians, including members of the Israeli Knesset, about the camp's many problems.

Advocate Felicia Langer who is representing Dheisheh residents in the case said that she will not withdraw her case until all the camp's 19 entrances are reopened. She said that freedom of movement is a basic right for everyone.

The Hebrew daily *Ma'ariv* said that the authorities had closed the entrance as a way to prevent residents from throwing stones at Israeli vehicles travelling on the main Jerusalem-Hebron road, and called the closure part of a policy of "collective punishment." *Ma'ariv* also led its readers to assume that the entrance was the only one closed and that Dheisheh residents now have full freedom of movement.

The opening session of the First Palestinian Thought Conference May 10. Speakers, from right to left, are: Ramel Mughani, Abd al-Latif Aqel, Dr Sami Mar'i, Fawzi Abdullah, Deyab Ayoush, Mustafa Natshe, and Hanna Abu Hanna.

# Mawakeb Holds Forum on Palestinian Thought

The "First Conference on Palestinian Thought," aimed at depicting Palestinian culture before 1948, was convened in Nazareth from May 10 to 12. The conference was sponsored by the *Mawakeb* cultural magazine, which is closely aligned with the Progressive List for Peace. It was intended to promote studies about different aspects of Palestinian thought.

More than 100 intellectuals, including many from Palestinian and Israeli universities, attended and most termed it a success. Fifteen lectures were presented on Palestinian society, culture, heritage, and literature in the period before 1948.

In addition to lectures, there was an art exhibit of Kamal Mughani's paintings of rural life in Palestine. An entertainment programme of poetry recitation, music, and singing was also featured.

Dr Sami Mar'i of Haifa University delivered the closing speech and called the conference successful, although he admitted that more intellectuals from the West Bank and Gaza should have been included.

Although the conference did not issue recommendations, it included valuable information. Fawzi Abdullah, the editor of *Mawakeb* magazine, said that intellectuals from all areas of Palestine will be included in the second conference.

The Israeli Communist Party, Rakah, boycotted the conference. Rakah leaders, including the mayor of Nazareth, Tawfiq Zayyad, and Emil Tuma, Rakah's ideologue and an important Palestinian historian, condemned the conference in *Al Ittihad* newspaper. Tuma wrote, "Those who initiated this conference decided consciously that their activity would be narrow and factional." Zayyad termed it "a conference for fabricating and distorting the historical and cultural heritage of our people."

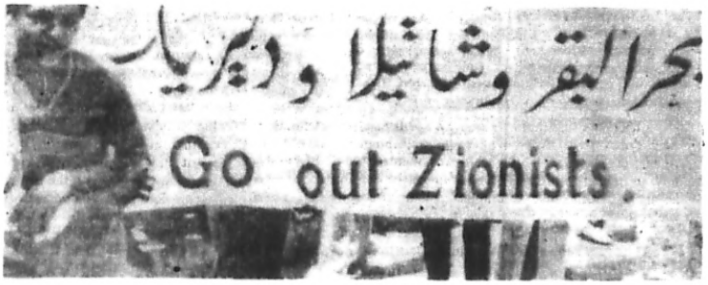
# Egyptians Protest Israeli 'Independence'

More than 300 demonstrators chanted anti-Israeli slogans, burned an Israeli flag and raised Palestinian flags during a demonstration outside of Cairo's main Jewish synagogue May 15. Egyptian riot police forcefully intervened to disperse the demonstrators, arresting many of them.

The protest, on the anniversary of Britain's withdrawal from Palestine in 1948, took place while Egyptian and Israeli negotiators were meeting a few blocks away to discuss the future of the disputed Taba area in the Sinai. The demonstration was prompted by news reports in leftist Egyptian newspapers that a celebration would be held at the synagogue on Israel's "Independence Day." In Israel, however, "Independence Day" is celebrated according to the Jewish Calendar. This year it fell on April 25.

The demonstrators carried placards saying "what was taken by force can be returned only by force" and distributed leaflets to passers-by denouncing the Zionist movement and calling for a struggle against this ideology. The leaflets, signed by the Gamal Abd al-Nasser Arab Committee, urged the Arab people to express their rejection of the continuing operation of the Israeli embassy in Cairo.

Police allowed the demonstrators to stay for two hours before intervening. They then used clubs to disperse them by force. Many were reportedly arrested.




# Settlers and Government Lock Horns Over Policy

Confiscated Arab land amounting to 2500 dunums just south of Bethlehem was the subject of a settlement dispute between Gush Emunim settlers and the Israeli Ministry of Housing last week. Gush Emunim is insisting on retaining control over the site, but the Housing Ministry intends to make the site a suburb of Jerusalem in its continuing effort to expand the boundaries of the city to assure permanent Israeli retention over occupied East Jerusalem.

The land belongs to residents of the villages of Hussan and al-Khader, south of Bethlehem. It was declared "state land" a few weeks after the establishment of the Israeli national unity government last fall. The government approved establishment of a settlement on the land as part of a six-settlement plan to house over 20,000 Jewish settlers.

The Ministry of Housing started constructing townhouses on the site several weeks ago. The owners of the land took the case to the Israeli High Court as soon as construction commenced, but the court has yet to look into the case. Jamil Hussani, a landowner and resident of Hussan, told *Al Fajr* that the owners "are enraged that construction is still going on despite their appeal to the High Court."

As soon as the ministry construction started, a group of 15 Gush Emunim families moved in May 8, established a temporary encampment, and declared it the settlement of "Hadar Beitar." The group announced that it objected to the ministry's plans, saying that Gush Emunim must retain full control over who will be allowed to live in the settlement and to what degree it will be connected to Jerusalem. The group defied a ministry order to evacuate the site.

A spokesperson in the Ministry of Housing accused Gush Emunim of "caring only about increasing the Jewish presence in the West Bank, regardless of where and how. We differ with them this time because we had different plans for this specific site." The ministry, according to the spokesperson, will sell the housing units to any Jewish group or individual that wants to buy them. "They want the site for themselves only because they have political objectives to reach," the spokesperson said. The ministry spokesperson did not expect force would be used to evict the settlers "as long as they do not obstruct construction on the site."

A Gush Emunim spokesperson, however, told *Al Fajr* that the group considered it their "right to settle on the site" since the West Bank is "Jewish land" and that Gush Emunim will not give up its right to exercise total control over who will live there.

Meron Benvenisti, a leading Israeli expert on settlements in the West Bank, dismissed the matter as "an internal quarrel between two parties who have the same objective: namely, confiscation of Arab land for the purpose of settling Jews." He said that the end result is the same, regardless of disputes or agreements between the settlers and the Ministry of Housing. "A Jewish settlement will be constructed and the Arabs will not get their land back," he said.

Landowner Hussani echoed this assessment. He expected that the dispute between the settlers and the Israeli Ministry of Housing would end in favour of the settlers and not the owners because "it always ends that way."

# Jewish Terrorists Go to the Beach

The members of the Jewish underground, now on trial at the Jerusalem district court, spent the afternoon of Thursday, May 9, swimming at the Netanya beach.

On their way back to the Tel Mond prison where they are being held, a border guard officer allowed them to get out of the police van in Netanya and take a dip in the sea. The whole episode would probably have never come to light had not one of the defendants, Haim Ben David, almost drowned. He had to be taken to hospital.

The minister of police ordered an investigation into the episode and various rumours about picnics held on the way back to the prison with the defendants' families and friends. On May 15, the senior border guard officer who had allowed the underground members to go swimming was dismissed. (Translation: HaAretz, May 10, 1985; Al Hamishmar, May 15, 1985)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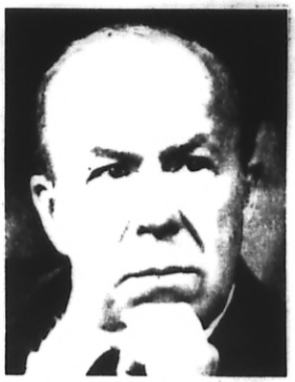
# Shultz Follows Murphy to Region



George Shultz

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

Richard Murphy, US assistant secretary of state for the Near East, was dispatched to the region following highlevel appeals from Saudi and Egyptian heads of state to the American president. Reports, as scarce as they were during the Murphy tour, indicated that he was not making any progress was not expecting any, and even would not have gone there altogether if it were not for the Arab pleas for US involvement.

Middle East experts in Washington, DC believe Murphy went to the Middle East to pressure the Arabs, not Israel. The US sincerely believes that the Arabs must change their stand not Israel; that they should move yet closer to Israel's position, not vice versa. Hence, they say, the outcome of Murphy's trip to the region depends on what the Arabs do.

The US has told the Arab states to forget the PLO, to forget an independent state for the Palestinians, to forget about Jerusalem, and to accept direct negotiations with Israel so that Israel may bless this outcome. There is not even one demand on Israel; how then could Murphy's visit have been successful without the Arabs handing him another concession?

Even before he returned to Washington, American Middle East correspondents were reporting that Murphy was unable to convince the Arabs to go it alone without the PLO and enter negotiations with Israel. It was later reported that Murphy was "redirected" to the PLO by Palestinian leaders with whom he met while on the West Bank. The State Department spokesperson, Ed Djerejian refused to confirm or deny this story.

Richard Murphy

Djerejian said that "a number of petitions were presented to Assistant Secretary Murphy when he was in Jerusalem." Although he refused to comment directly about the petition, he did say, "Our policy on the PLO is firm. It is well-known to all parties That is, we will not negotiate..."

Then talking about Palestinian demands for self-determination, Djerejian articulated the US concept of the phrase "the legitimate rights of the Palestinians" expressed in both the Camp David accords and the Reagan plan of September 1982. Djerejian observed that the term self-determination "in the Middle East context has come to connote the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. The US," he continued, "does not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and therefore cannot support that definition of self-determination." Further details, he added, should be dealt with in direct negotiations between the parties.

### Shultz Next

Although the results of Murphy's visit to the Middle East were not seen as a victory for the US policy, previously a precondition for a similar Shultz visit, the US secretary of state it was announced, will also stop in Cairo and Amman after his visit to Israel.

Shultz's plans to go to Israel were made long before it was announced that Murphy would go to the region. The visit was intended to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the defeat of Nazism. Shultz was planning to go to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, simply "as George Shultz, not as the secretary of state," said a State Department official on the condition that his name not be mentioned. The original plan was that while in Israel Shultz would not have any political discussions, and thus it was not on his agenda to go to neighbouring Arab states. It later seemed unlikely, the official said, that Shultz could avoid political talks, "given the state of affairs *vis-a-vis* the peace process and the bilateral issues between the US and Israel." Once that was realised, the official said, it then was decided that the secretary would stop at Cairo and Amman. However, it has been reported by the American media that Shultz's visit to Jordan and Egypt is only to balance his visit in Israel, so that the Arabs will not feel left out.

As to the connection between Murphy's trip and Shultz's visit, the official said that the two are "essentially unrelated." Murphy's visit may have influenced Shultz but not decisively. The official noted that Shultz will cover much of the same ground as Murphy did, including talking to some of the leaders: He warned, "I would say our expectations are modest."

About the nature and formation of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation and the composition of the Palestinian part of it, the official said that Jordan has to "define with some degree of precision what the composition of such a delegation may be " and "then to be able to show us how meeting with such a delegation is going to advance us towards our goal of direct negotiations." As to who the US might accept, if not PLO members or if not those who are closely associated with the PLO, the official said that there will be too many Palestinians left. He hinted that members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) may be acceptable, depending on who the individual is. "The PNC is an umbrella organisation," he said, and "I am not going to give you a blanket approval, but it depends on which individual one is talking about." ■

# Only the PLO Represents Palestinians

It has become apparent that Secretary George Shultz and special envoy Richard Murphy have finally understood the message that the issue concerning the composition of the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation emanating from the PLO-Jordan accord of February 11, 1985 is not about finding acceptable non-PLO Palestinian delegates. The main issue stressed by the Palestinians wherever they have been contacted was that in order for this delegation to be formed, the US and Israel should accept that this delegation must be chosen and nominated by the PLO.

This is what both Shultz and Murphy were told during their visits to the Arab countries and with Palestinians, and this is the message that Murphy is relaying back to the Israeli government now that Shultz has left the region.

If a durable peace is to emerge from negotiations, the parties to the controversy, the adversaries, have to be represented at the negotiating table. The Israelis have the right to choose their own representative, and they have an elected government to serve this purpose. At the same time, the Palestinians have the right to choose their own representative, and they have chosen the PLO. This right is an essential part of the right to self-determination.

If the US, whose intentions are highly questionable and who is seen as grossly biased towards Israel, is sincere in its quest for peace in the region, it should work to get the two parties to the negotiating table under an international forum. This is a step that the Palestinians and the Arab world would consider as a clear signal that the US is working for a peaceful solution.

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Arab-American demonstrators look to a Chicago lunch crowd for response to the Palestinian predicament.

# American-Arab Relations: The Degeneration of a Friendship

by Mohammed Hallaj

At this time when the Arabs view America, above all, as Israel's strategic ally, and when America increasingly sees the Arab world become a place where America's soldiers, diplomats, journalists, clergy, and academicians may go at their own risk, it is easy to see the degeneration of the relationship and to overlook the friendship. But both are needed to understand the story of US-Arab relations: their past, their present, and hopefully their future possibilities.

Most Americans today would be surprised to learn how much goodwill America enjoyed in the Arab world until relatively recently. Every American child is taught in school that the French stood by America when it struggled for independence. But how many Americans know that it was an Arab country, Morocco, which first welcomed the infant United States of America to the family of nations? How many Americans know that America's longest surviving treaty of friendship with any foreign country dating back to 1789 — as old as the US Constitution — is with an Arab country, again Morocco? This promising beginning was not a transient aberration. Because, in fact, it characterised a historic pattern which only recently, and for specific and identifiable reasons, began to deteriorate.

US-Arab relations until recently were minimal, but that was not a consequence of any apprehensions on either side. The United States lived in its "splendid isolation" between two large oceans and busied itself with the building of a continent and the creation of a polity, and the Arabs struggled to preserve or to restore national independence against a new upsurge of European colonialism. But within the constraints of the period, civilised relations based on mutual respect and benefit continued to mark US-Arab relations.

America welcomed Arab immigrants and gave them a home, and sent to the Arab world emissaries suited to represent the best it had to offer, particularly educators who introduced the earliest Arabic printing presses and built reputable centres of learning. The Arabs reciprocated with affection for the new hopeful experiment which was arising across the seas and with admiration and respect for its ideals.

The positive interaction was reinforced by positive images the Americans and Arabs had of each other. Considering the negative stereotyping of the Arabs which today prevails in this country, stereotyping which reaches the level of a racist hate campaign, it is difficult to remember that until recently the Arabs and their culture were not targeted for mockery and disdain. As Professor Jack Shahin, who studied this phenomenon, recently observed: "American and European artists who travelled to the Middle East created generally positive portraits of the people there. They captured on canvas wonderful images of Arab horsemen and scribes, festivals, caravans, and everyday sights from carpet bazaars to ships on the River Nile." In their dealings as well as in their perceptions, Arabs and Americans reciprocated friendship and mutual respect.

When the Great War came and sucked America into the troubles of the old world, and when America sought to use that occasion for the establishment of a new world order based on the equality of nations, on the universal right to national self-government, and on a global coalition against aggression — the League of Nations — the Arabs responded in a unique way to this new (and regrettably abortive) American interest in world affairs.

America, which half-a-century earlier had suffered the agonies of the greatest war fought in the 19th century to free its domestic society from the stigma and burdens of slavery, risked involvement in a global war to advance the cause of liberty in the world community. The Arabs, who dreamed of a new dawn in their homeland, found in these American commitments and endeavours an encouragement for their aspirations and a welcome counterbalance to the traditional powers of the old world which schemed and struggled to enlarge their dominion over other peoples.

Lured by false promises of national freedom, the Arabs fought with the European allies against the Central Powers. But they reaped great betrayal. Wilson's America fought to free captive peoples, but its European allies fought for more spoils, among which the Arab East was to be the principal prize. When President Woodrow Wilson identified America's war aims in his famous 14 points which he proclaimed before a

*Continued on page 7*

# Neturei Karta Invites Shultz to Mea Shearim

After a long discussion with American Consul Robert Bell on May 8 at the East Jerusalem Consulate, outlining plans for the Middle East, Rabbi Moshe Hirsch gave over the following letter for US Secretary of State Shultz and presented Secretary Shultz with a rare opportunity to be the guest of the Neturei Karta on Friday night, the Jewish *sabbath*, and join in a festive *sabbath* meal with the Hirsch family.

May 10, 1985

**Honourable Secretary of State George Shultz,**

**Welcome to Jerusalem, the international Holy City of peace. The nations of the world — including the United States — recognise Jerusalem as an international area. We, the Neturei Karta, who represent the Jewish people of the world who are not inflicted with the heretic disease of Zionism, do not recognise the Zionist sacrilege state. We invite you to visit our autonomous enclave, Mea Shearim and vicinity. It is the only area on Palestinian international territory not ruled by the *de facto* Zionist government. Your visit to Mea Shearim would instigate a lasting peace process in the Middle East, since it would be a step forward by the United States, the patron of the Zionist state, to formally abide by United Nations resolutions — rather than sanctioning a rule which is in constant defiance of accepted United Nations resolutions. It would appear hypocritical to demand of the Palestinian representation to waver on their principles, which contradict UN Resolution 242, while at the same time you and your government disregard the UN resolution which defines Jerusalem as an extra-territorial international area.**

**May we take the liberty to offer you, Mr Secretary, and your government some practical advice. Why should the American government invest their hard-earned dollars on a barren, infertile economy which buries its easy-earned "*shnorr*" (beggers) money, especially at the expense of those residents — both Arab and Jewish — who comprise the core of the indigenous Palestinian population. The American currency bears the prestigious imprint "In G-d we trust." Why can't this currency be distributed to those who place their trust in G-d, rather than to those who place their trust in material weaponry put at the disposal of careerists who place their personal advancement ahead of dedicated goals for the benefit of their countrymen?**

**Mr Secretary, the veteran Palestinian Jewish residents whose land was taken from underneath them by the Zionist usurpers appeal to you to assert your and your government's influence to undo the wrongs which became unlawfully effective through your government's aloof stand and non-implementation of the UN resolutions to internationalise Jerusalem. We (who reside elsewhere in Jerusalem) were thus forced to be ruled by the sacrilege Zionist government, which amounts to religious coercion.**

**We do not recognise a government which rebels against and does not recognise the Kingdom of G-d.**

**May you and your government be rewarded manifoldly for your beneficence and concern for those who are helpless, and may you be guided from Above to tread a path which is in compliance with Divine Sanction. Mutual and reciprocal amicability of those residing in Palestine should be the goal of those governments upon whom G-d bestowed the task of untangling the Middle East intricacies.**

**In the name of the seven-man Neturei Karta Supreme Council,**

**Rabbi Moshe Hirsch**
**Secretary, Neturei Karta**
**Jerusalem, Palestine**

# American - Arab Relations

*Continued from page 6*

joint session of Congress, George Clemenceau cynically remarked: "God gave us 10 commandments and we broke them. Wilson gave us 14 points; we shall see."

The Arab peoples became the principal victims of this European cynicism. Even as they fought what they proclaimed to be anachronistic despotisms, the European powers schemed to dispossess and subjugate the Arab people. The Sykes-Picot Treaty of 1916, and the Balfour Declaration of 1917 were to become the West's instruments for bequeathing to the Arab nation and to the Middle East a most flagrant injustice and a most cruel ordeal from which the whole region suffers today.

The Arabs had sufficient regard for America's ideals and sufficient confidence in its purpose to welcome its primacy in their region. When it became apparent at the end of World War I that the peoples of the Arab East were to be denied the political independence for which they fought and which they were deceitfully promised, and when it became known that they were to be placed under the mandatory authority of an external power, they chose the United States to be that power.

This vote of confidence in America, which amounted to a popular plebiscite, was expressed in 1919 to the King-Crane Commission dispatched by President Wilson to ascertain the wishes of the Arab people. Even more important than the vote of confidence itself were the reasons behind it. What the Arab people said was that they were confident that among the victorious allies, America was the one country which entered the war to ensure a more just and free world order and which was not motivated by ambitions for hegemony and territorial aggrandisement. They used the example of the Philippines to point out that America was a reluctant ruler over other peoples, a temporary trustee sincerely committed to the welfare and future freedom of the territories it governed.

America, however, was not in the mood to respond to such overtures. Domestic moods and concerns aborted this early experiment in global engagement, and America withdrew behind the reassuring expanse of its "shining seas."

It is most unfortunate that when conditions become ripe for another, more sustained, global engagement after World War II, two things happened simultaneously which warped American perceptions of the Arab world, perverted its mission, and had the most destructive impact on US-Arab relations.

First, the world Zionist leadership shifted from Britain to the United States during World War II, symbolised by the convening of the Zionist Biltmore Conference in New York City in 1942, and subsequent events.

Zionism, which was not indigenous to the region, and being itself a foreign intrusion, always needed an external umbilical cord to sustain it. Increasingly pressed by the forces of nationalism in its far-flying dominions, Britain, whose power was seriously depleted in the struggle against fascism, found the Zionist burden increasingly onerous. On the other hand, the Zionist movement, faced with an imminent struggle to dispossess the Palestinians and consequently provoking confrontation with the Arab nation, needed increased rather than diminished external support. Britain was no longer suitable to be the sponsor the Zionist movement needed in the post-war years.

The Zionist movement chose America to be its new sponsor. America had a large, prosperous and well-connected Jewish community. Its political system made it particularly susceptible to manipulation (or at least effective influence) by well-organised, well-endowed, properly distributed, determined and single-minded interest groups. Furthermore, America was ready for the first time in its history for a massive and sustained involvement in world affairs. Along with the political, military and economic leadership of the Western world, the United States inherited from Britain the role of principal sponsor of the Zionist movement. Although US partiality to Israel in its aggression against the Arabs subsequently became unequivocal and pronounced, America had not yet silenced its conscience or disowned its ideals in dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict. It not only contributed to the subsistence of the Palestinian refugees, but it also supported their right of return.

The occupation of the rest of Palestine by Israel in 1967 unleashed limitless fanatical zeal within the American Zionist community. Israel's stunning military victory almost completely Zionised the American Jewish community. Only a few American Jews were able to resist the temptation of marching to the Zionist tune. American politicians, journalists and other wielders of influence found it increasingly risky to run afoul of Israel and its domestic advocates or, conversely, to show any sympathy for Arab interests or views. US policy became thoroughly aligned with that of Israel until it became difficult for an Arab to distinguish one from the other. This fact was finally formalised in an agreement of "strategic cooperation" between the US and Israel. America became, for all practical purposes, Israel's underwriter, not only its supporter. In effect, the US surrendered to Israel authority to formulate its Middle East policy. In view of these facts, the surprising thing is not that US-Arab relations badly deteriorated but that the two sides are still on speaking terms.

The second important reason behind the shift in American policy which caused US-Arab relations to deteriorate is the change which took place in America's world view. It is important to understand that the influence of the Zionist lobby derives in part from the transformation which took place in America's world view.

There are two main aspects to the new American world view which militate against better Arab-American relations.

A. Growing disillusionment and even resentment of the third world, its causes, and its perceived interests. Political instability, authoritarianism, widespread corruption, administrative incompetence and all the other ills which afflict much of the third world, were partially responsible for the estrangement from the US. The fact that third world countries have different priorities from those of the first world (eg, new economic order rather than preoccupation with a Soviet threat) also contributed to this estrangement.

The third world's insistence on selling instead of practically giving away their national resources to the industrial countries deepened the estrangement to resentment. Many of the world's problems which most troubled the ordinary citizen were blamed on presumably greedy third world producers of raw materials. The main culprit was identified to be OPEC, and OPEC was identified as an Arab cartel, even when its Arab members were the ones who worked hardest to hold the line on rising prices.

The adversaries of the Arab people took advantage of this golden opportunity to encourage anti-Arab hysteria which reached the level of an explicit racist campaign. In films, in novels, in textbooks, in cartoons, in editorials, and even in television commercials, the Arab was portrayed as a global Shylock, without compassion, without courage, without any sense of responsibility. The Palestinians, particularly, were victimised by this anti-Arab hysteria. The Zionist-inspired label of terrorism has become in the most real sense an ironically cruel blood libel against the Palestinian people.

**Pro-Palestinian demonstrators flanked by New York riot police in a protest against US funding of the Israeli war machine.**

B. The second element in America's new world view which worked against better Arab-American relations was America's switch from "missionary diplomacy" to what has been termed "warrior diplomacy." In the mid-1950's, the conflict known as the cold war was invariably described as a "struggle for the minds of men." America's national interest was thought best served by demonstrating to the world the superiority of America's principles, ideals, and way of life. This view has been chased out by the current view that the global conflict is a military confrontation between superpowers. It is no longer a question of whose way of life is more attractive, it is a question of who has greater and more accurate fire power.

Applied to the Middle East, this American version of the Stalinist perception of the global conflict necessarily meant that the weaker Arabs were bound to lose out in the competition with Israel for America's respect and affection. America treated Israel as an equal, and the Arabs as an underling; it dealt with Israel as a partner, and with the Arabs as a nuisance. Even Arab leaders known to be most friendly to the United States, like King Hussein, lost hope in its capacity to be an honest referee, let alone a friend.

One must not overlook also the Arab's share in the responsibility for the deterioration of US-Arab relations. I doubt if anyone, Arab or American, would argue with me when I say that the Arabs could do better in the use of their resources to command greater respect for their culture and greater support for their causes. The Arabs, given the resources available to them and the easy access to knowledge which prevails in the world today, can do much more to become again contributors to human progress rather than its beneficiaries. We, the Arabs, must reinvigorate our societies, and we must dignify them with liberty. Then we can more forcefully demand friendship and respect. Equally important, we can make transgressions against us less likely — by making them more costly.

When we consider the trend as well as the factors which have been influencing US-Arab relations, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that although the future of Arab-American relations is not hopeless, it is certainly discouraging.

Arab-American relations should be much better than they are. There is no inherent conflict of a serious nature between the interests of the parties. It largely depends on how the US seeks to safeguard and further its interests. If it seeks to do so through cooperation, the Arabs would welcome mutually beneficial interaction. If it seeks to do so through domination, through an application of the Monroe Doctrine to the Arab world, the Arabs cannot be expected to react differently than they did to previous empire builders who crashed into their homeland.

On the other hand, the forces which have been determining US policy in the Middle East do not seem to be transient and temporary. It seems that their impact will continue to be weighty, a fact which does not augur well for at least the foreseeable future of US-Arab relations.

Both Arabs and Americans concerned about the future of US-Arab relations can do something about improving the odds. Americans need to understand that their policy-makers can be responsive to the concerns of a powerful lobby, but without surrendering their will or their broader obligation to the national interest; and that they can be responsive to the requirements of security without abandoning the dictates of conscience.

The Arabs need to demonstrate that they have not totally lost the capacity to become angry. It may make matters worse in the short run, but better in the long run. The Arabs must make it clear that improved US-Arab relations are not a favour to the Arabs, but rather in the interest of all concerned. The Arabs need to present America not only with an argument but also with an incentive to pursue a policy less inimical to Arab interests and aspirations. Only then, in my view, is it possible to arrest and reverse the degeneration of Arab-American friendship.

*Dr Mohammed Hallaj is the Director of the Palestine Research and Educational Centre in Washington, DC. This piece was excerpted from a paper he presented to a conference on US-Arab Relations, sponsored by the American-Arab Affairs Council, which was held in Salt Lake City, Utah March 28, 1985.* ■

St. John's Hospital Reaches Out to Battle Blindness

# New Study Shows Eye Disease Widespread in West Bank and Gaza

by Maher Abukhater

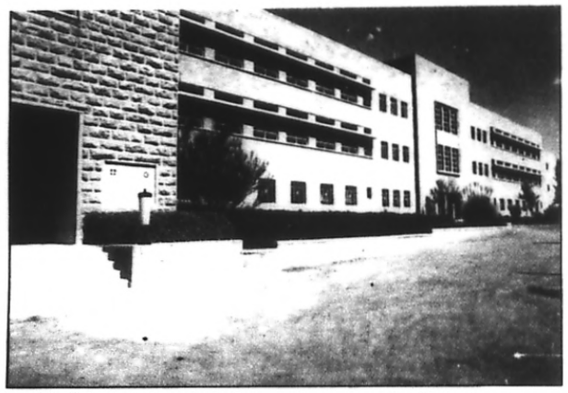
The West Bank and Gaza Strip are considered by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as "underdeveloped" areas, with a large percentage of the population living in rural areas where disease is prevalent. There is a general lack of proper medical facilities for prevention or treatment before a disease becomes serious. The WHO's classification would seem appropriate in at least one important health area: eye care.

According to a study conducted in the West Bank and Gaza Strip between November 1982 and April 1983 by opthalmologists I.M. Thomson and L.C. Chumbley of Jerusalem's St John Opthalmic Hospital and published in the *British Journal of Ophthalmology* 1.7 percent of the total population of the West Bank and Gaza suffer such extremely low visual acuity in both eyes that they can be considered blind. This is a much higher figure than most Western European countries — classified by WHO as "developed" with advanced medical services — which report blindness among the population to be a minimum of 0.15 percent and a maximum of 0.25 percent.

In the Thompson-Chumbley study, which used a sample of 9548 Palestinians (55.4 percent females and 44.6 males) with eye disease from 61 different locations in the occupied territories (estimated population 1.5 million), there were almost twice as many blind women as blind men (108 or 65 percent, compared to 57 or 34.5 percent). [No reason was given by the researchers for the higher proportion of females with blindness.] Blindness was also found, predictably, to increase with advancing age and prevailed more in villages than in towns (2.4 percent to 1.3 percent). The refugee camps, where UNRWA maintains health clinics, had only 1.8 percent blindness.

Trachoma, a severe form of contagious conjuctivitis caused by poor hygiene, and cataracts, a clouding of the natural lens of the eye which obscures vision, were found to be the most common serious eye diseases, affecting more than 70 percent of the blind.

Dr Marwan Zeidan, another opthalmologist at St John's — the only eye hospital in the West Bank serving a population of 1.0 million — cites two reasons for the high rate of eye disease in the occupied territories: lack of education about eye disease on the part of the rural population and lack of referral centres or eye clinics in villages or nearby cities equipped for eye surgery. Zeidan believes the West Bank and Gaza can witness a great leap forward in controlling eye disease if these two problems are resolutely tackled.



St John Ophthalmic Hospital at its East Jerusalem location in Sheikh Jarrah.

In 1982, the staff of St John's launched an Outreach programme. The hospital operates two mobile health units, provided by donors from Canada, for the purpose of reaching the rural population in the West Bank and Gaza. While treating patients on location in the various villages, the staff do what they can to educate villagers on the importance of healthy eyes. In 1984, the Outreach vans visited between 55-60 Palestinian villages as far away as Rafah on the Egyptian borders and in the Jordan Valley. Some areas were visited more than once, depending on the gravity of the problems. A total of 24,000 patients were seen; of these, about 400 were in need of surgery and referred to the eye hospital in Jerusalem.

In spite of the free Outreach service and detection of serious eye disease in much of the population, a large number of the patients either never report to the hospital for treatment or, if medication is required, take the medicine for a shorter period, mainly for lack of concern, than advised, rendering the remedy useless, Zeidan said.

Zeidan blamed several socio-economic factors for this apathy and lack of knowledge about eye disease. He said most of the patients are old and poor and find it difficult to travel to hospital. A 70-year-old patient from a village near Gaza, for example, needs a large sum of money just for transportation, if found, to Jerusalem and a much larger amount for hospital costs which can skyrocket if surgery is needed. Usually, someone must accompany the older patient if he or she eventually decides to make the trip. This may not always be possible, as it means the loss of a day's work or more, doubled transportation cost, and general inconvenience. One elderly patient from Jalameh village in the Jenin district, about 120 kilometres north of Jerusalem, came to St John's accompanied by a young neighbour. The young man said the elderly woman had no relatives to come with her and he decided to take the responsibility upon himself. This is his second visit to the eye hospital with the woman, who suffered from pain around an artificial right eye. Doctors discovered she had installed the eye upside down, causing her distress. The woman was operated on two years ago for a collapsed retina and her right eye was removed.

While money and the patient's health are critical considerations when travelling to the hospital, lack of knowledge about the eye malady and what could ensue if not treated is no less important. In the study by Dr Thomson and Chumbley it was projected that nearly 70 percent of a total of 20,000 Palestinians considered blind in both eyes would have had a good chance to save their vision if they had been treated surgically.

Dr Zeidan, stressing the importance of a check-up after an injury to the eye or when signs of some eye disorder are detected, said many patients come to hospital too late to correct the defect. He said trauma, an eye injury, is a major cause of blindness among children under 12 years of age. St John offers free treatment to children under 12. Eye injury among children is caused mainly when playing with harmful objects like sticks and rocks. Dr Zeidan said statistics from developing countries show a high rate of blindness from eye injury, while in the developed countries trauma is a secondary cause. Among adults in rural Palestine "agricultural injury" is one example of eye injury, according to Dr Zeidan. He said that since most of the rural population work in the fields, the chance that a farmer will injure an eye — either from dirt or pesticides while ploughing or picking vegetables or from tree branches while picking fruit — is very high. In such a case, Dr Zeidan said the farmer often overlooks the injury, believing it will go away in time, when in actuality it worsens. The farmer may seek medication only after the injury grows more severe and becomes irritating. By then, said Zeidan, it is usually too late to correct the defect.

The problem of seeking treatment too late can be partly attributed to the lack of eye clinics in the rural areas and their vicinity. The Thomson-Chumbley survey showed that the Hebron district, with a large concentration of underdeveloped but populous rural areas, registers practical blindness at 2.9 percent of the total population. The more urban Bethlehem district, which is much closer to Jerusalem with better transportation facilities, has only 0.9 percent blindness. While the Outreach units can only treat a certain number of patients during their visit to the village, many people could be treated immediately and eyes saved if a permanent eye clinic in the vicinity were established. An injured person could then take a few minutes off work to go for a quick eye examination. But because a trip to Jerusalem requires time, effort, and money, many persons choose to leave their injuries untreated.

In the village of Idna (population 14,000), near Hebron, a 10-month-old girl was brought by her mother to the Outreach mobile clinic. The baby suffered from severe squinting. When examined, the baby's squint was found to be caused by a fast-growing tumour in both eyes. Doctors predict that the child will lose one or both eyes, if not her life. This might have been prevented if the tumour had been discovered and treated in the first few months of life.

In the village of Surif, halfway between Bethlehem and Hebron, an old man was diagnosed as having an advanced tumour below his left lower eyelid. The tumour had damaged the entire eye and surrounding bones and nose. It was too late to save the eye.

Another 80-year-old man in Surif, long considered blind by his family, was too poor to afford even an eye checkup in Jerusalem. The Outreach staff took him to hospital for a free operation. A damaged eye lens was replaced and the old man left the hospital able to see again.

St John staff examine the eyes of a Palestinian girl in a routine checkup during the Outreach visit.

Ophthalmologists at St John's say that nearly 25 percent of those with poor vision could have it corrected with glasses. But for reasons of social propriety these people, estimated to number 20,000, do not wear glasses. Some believe wearing glasses would affect their status and relationship to others in society. Some men feel it would affect their masculinity. Parents who have daughters with poor vision often will not let them wear glasses for fear that their daughters will not get married if they do.

In addition to trauma or injury, infection is another cause of eye disease, particularly in the outlying rural villages. Sanitary conditions in villages facilitate the spread of infection. Open sewage runs through the streets, dirty water is everywhere, and animals — mainly donkeys, chickens, and sheep — run free. As a result, bacterial infection, carried by flies, is easily spread. Given the collective nature of daily life and the poverty in rural areas, the family may share household linens — so if one member has an eye infection, it is more likely to spread to the rest of the family. It may be that only a Palestinian national government in the occupied territories could adequately care for the health of its citizens and work towards improving conditions.

Opthalmologists also say that several eye disorders are hereditary. In Arab society, intermarriage among relatives, especially cousins, is frequent and a socially acceptable occurrence. In many cases, direct relationships between married couples go back several generations in a family. But if a couple are both blind and blood-related, chances of the children being born blind are 50 percent. If only one parent is blind, chances are only 25 percent. Several hereditary eye diseases — referred to in medical terms as retinitis pigmentosa, or retinoblastoma, or congenital cataracts — are incurable.

On average, 40,000 patients are seen every year at St John Hospital and 4000 operations performed. The hospital, run by the Order of St John which has been in Jerusalem since 600 AD, was during the first half of the 20th century the centre of advanced eye treatment for the whole Middle East. The first ophthalmic hospital of the St John Order was built here in 1882. During the Turkish, British, Jordanian, and part of the Israeli occupations of Palestine, free treatment was given to all patients who came from various Middle Eastern countries. The hospital was operated on generous donations from many nations.

Following the 1948 war, which split Palestine in two, St John's found itself in territory controlled by the Zionists, although most of its patients were Arab. As a result, the hospital was moved to Arab-controlled East Jerusalem. In 1960, the current building in Sheikh Jarrah was completed and included 80 beds. It is still considered a major eye hospital for the Middle East region.

After the 1967 war, which brought all of Jerusalem under Israeli occupation, the hospital was cut off from the rest of the region and could serve only the 1.5 million Palestinian residents of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. This new status seriously affected hospital finances, which had largely come from the Arab world. As a result, the hospital was faced with several financial problems and the quality of service gradually deteriorated. In 1974, in order to save the hospital and its mission, the St John administration had no choice but to begin charging those who could afford to pay for services, whereas before it had all been free. This affected the hospital negatively, since many patients were from the poorer villages and were therefore unable to pay the fees. They chose instead to live with their eye diseases.

In the early '80s, the hospital administration was determined to do something to prevent further deterioration in services. Donations were sought from friends of the hospital in the Arab world, Europe and the US and better and newer equipment purchased. The outpatient clinics were refurbished and staffed by highly qualified tecnnicians. The hospital eye bank increased its supply of corneas obtained through donations from an eye bank in the US. The hospital was finally back on its feet, acting as one of the most advanced eye hospitals in the whole Middle East even though its patients continue to be Palestinian. The administration now hope that more money can be found to keep the hospital running and improve facilities and to be able to give free treatment once again to its patients. ■

**NEARLY 70 PERCENT OF A TOTAL OF 20,000 PALESTINIANS CONSIDERED BLIND IN BOTH EYES WOULD HAVE HAD A GOOD CHANCE TO SAVE THEIR VISION IF THEY HAD BEEN TREATED SURGICALLY.**

*Percentage blind from bilateral cataract for each geographical location*

| *Location* | *% blind* |
|---|---|
| Hebron | 1·0 |
| Tulkarm | 0·7 |
| Ramallah | 0·7 |
| Jerusalem | 0·6 |
| Jericho | 0·6 |
| Nablus | 0·5 |
| Gaza | 0·5 |
| Jenin | 0·3 |
| Bethlehem | 0·2 |

(source: Thomson-Chumbley survey)

*Causes of blindness in the binocularly blind by eye*

| *England and Wales* | *Eyes (%)* | *W. Bank and Gaza* | *Eyes (%)* |
|---|---|---|---|
| SMD | 27·0 | Cataract | 41·5 |
| Cataract | 22·6 | Trachoma | 17·6 |
| Glaucoma | 12·0 | Corneal leucoma | 7·6 |
| Myopia | 8·2 | Aphakia | 6·7 |
| Diabetic retinopathy | 7·1 | Myopia | 5·8 |
| Others | 23·1 | Others | 20·8 |
| Total | 100·0 | | 100·0 |

SMD = senile macular degeneration (source: Thomson-Chumbley survey)

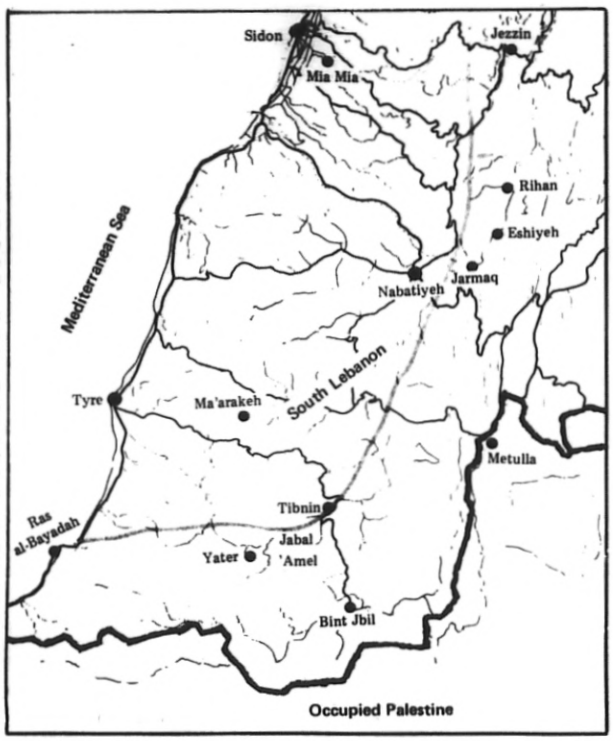
| | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **New Cases** | 15091 | 16826 | 16673 | 18526 | 19923 |
| **Total Attendances** | 34470 | 37758 | 35905 | 38993 | 42608 |
| **Admissions** | 2274 | 2374 | 2132 | 2340 | 2595 |
| **Operations** | 4463 | 4293 | 3910 | 4291 | 4540 |
| **Glasses Ordered** | 4109 | 4372 | 4275 | 3962 | 5032 |
| **COMMONER & MORE SIGNIFICANT OPERATIONS** | | | | | |
| **Tarsectomy** | 97 | 66 | 57 | 60 | 105 |
| **Chalazion** | 166 | 168 | 183 | 221 | 209 |
| **Cystectomy** | 3 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| **D-C-R** | 48 | 81 | 53 | 68 | 62 |
| **Strabismus** | 243 | 233 | 207 | 246 | 306 |
| **Evisceration** | 20 | 8 | 20 | 22 | 9 |
| **Enucleation** | 30 | 26 | 15 | 16 | 22 |
| **Pterygium** | 275 | 287 | 225 | 179 | 252 |
| **Corneal Tattooing** | 2 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 12 |
| **Corneal Graft** | 4 | 30 | 37 | 39 | 50 |
| **Optical Iridectomy** | 10 | 10 | 5 | 12 | 18 |
| **Iris Prolapse** | 5 | 12 | 12 | 19 | 16 |
| **Cataract** | 861 | 869 | 751 | 1083 | 1131 |
| **Discission** | 166 | 144 | 89 | 23 | 56 |
| **Glaucoma** | 223 | 214 | 154 | 207 | 195 |
| **Retinal Detachment** | 73 | 70 | 84 | 71 | 60 |

**A chart listing the number of patients, together with the more common operations performed at St. John Eye Hospital.** (Source: Jerusalem Scene '85: The annual newsletter of the St. John Ophthalmic Hospital.)

# South Lebanon:

# The Illusion of the 'Security Belt'

**Below are four views from the Israeli press that point out the futility, hypocrisy, and confusion that lie at the heart of Israel's attempt to hold on to a "security belt" in south Lebanon.**




**It appears that not even the cabinet ministers know much of the withdrawal they voted for on Sunday, April 21. On one hand, the proposal put forward by the defence minister calls for the withdrawal of all Israeli army soldiers from Lebanon; on the other hand, it calls for patrols, reconnaissance, advisors for the SLA (South Lebanon Army), and most importantly, Israeli army "support" for the mercenary militias it has left to police south Lebanon. As to the exact nature of the "support" in question, Peres and Rabin seem to have left it up in the air. If the SLA doesn't fall apart and the Galilee border is relatively quiet, they'll be able to chalk up their policy as a success; if, on the contrary, Israeli soldiers continue to get killed there at what the public considers an alarming rate, or if the SLA falls apart, they may well decide to take the last step back over the international border. If that doesn't help, the politicians will begin implementing the threats they have been making of late: Rabin's "scorched earth" and Shamir's "we shall leave no stone unturned"...**

**From the beginning of the war, Peres and Rabin have remained true to the traditional Labour Party approach: always prefer a partial conquest to a total conquest and a partial withdrawal to a total withdrawal. There are no total solutions, no total victories, and no such thing as total peace. We must hold on to what we have and be wary of desiring what we lack.**

No one can accuse such politicians of the enthusiasm that imbued those who launched the Lebanese war. The Labour Party finds it much easier to be pushed into long-term catastrophes, like the slow political and military deterioration that led to the debacle of the October 1973 war.

At the beginning of the Lebanese war, when Begin and Sharon set their sights on Beirut, the Labour Alignment called on them to halt at the 40-kilometre line. Since then, it has continued its attempt to find the middle road in Lebanon. The security belt plan is a last ditch attempt to achieve this. (Translation: by Nahum Barnea, Koteret Rashit, April 24, 1985)

* * *

..."We have not asked the residents of the security belt to defend the state of Israel," said the minister of defence [at a press conference held after the government decided to go ahead with phase three of withdrawal]. But he immediately added, "However, they know that if terrorist actions start up again, they will be the first to suffer; they will be forced to leave their homes and villages. If they want their lives to return to normal, they must see to it that hostile elements — intending to attack Israel — are not allowed into their villages."

**The residents of south Lebanon, from Haseiva in the east to Nakoura in the west, could not have failed to notice the contradiction in Rabin's remarks. While saying that they are not responsible for the defence of Israel, the defence minister said that if they do not protect Israel, and if katyusha rockets fired from southern Lebanon land in the Galilee, they will be held accountable and the Israeli army will operate against their homes and villages.**

It is common knowledge that terrorist actions launched from south Lebanon against Israel will continue after the Israeli army complete its withdrawal from Lebanese territory. And the residents of the south know that Rabin means what he says, especially in regard to his threats that they will have to leave their homes. They also remember what he said during the Knesset security and foreign affairs committee debates last month about "scorched earth."

**The problem is, even if they manage to prevent hostile elements from entering their villages, that alone will not guarantee the peace of the Galilee. General Ori Orr pointed out that even 10 kilometres of "scorched earth" along the border could not guarantee the security of the settlements in northern Israel. A terrorist with a 107 millimetre katyusha can fire on the northern Galilee from beyond that point and return to Tyre.**

**Hence, even if the residents of the "security belt" do everything in their power to keep their villages free of terrorists, it is doubtful that that alone will be able to secure peace and quiet.**

This is where the SLA comes into the picture. Its role will be to spot those terrorists coming down from the north (who skirt the villages) and foil their attacks. The question is, will the SLA be strong enough... to prevent terrorist cells from entering the security zone? A lot of people in the Israeli army are sceptical about this...

Upon leaving the Sunday cabinet meeting April 21 minister Rabin announced that "if the SLA comes up against problems it cannot cope with, we will come to their aid." Now, most of the people in the defence establishment believe that the SLA will fall apart shortly after the Israeli army pullout. We are thus driven to conclude that the re-entry of the Israeli army into Lebanon is only a matter of time. (Translation: by Reuven Feldhauser, HaAretz, April 24, 1985)

* * *

...Of late, there has been a lot of talk about an 8-10-kilometre-wide security belt along the northern border... that may serve as a take-off point for Israeli tanks for punitive actions against anyone who disturbs the peace of the Galilee. Although the prime minister has emphasised that "we do not want any Lebanese territory, we do not want any Lebanese water, and we do not want to have anything to do with Lebanese politics," many Israeli army officers have hinted at the importance of a security belt, both for the purpose of knowing what is going on in Lebanon and for the purpose of being able to stage a quick response, if it becomes necessary.

But on closer examination Peres's remarks seem to make clear that without the Israeli army, General Lahad is no more than a deflated football. He simply cannot protect the Christian villages on his own. The underlying message in Peres's remarks is this: it is very much in Israel's interests to preserve good relations with the villages in the Christian enclave so that they may serve as an outer buffer zone for Israel's northern border... (Translation: by Israel Zamir, Al Hamishmar, April 24, 1985)

* * *

...What is even more worrying is the lack of clarity of Israeli policy in regard to the different ethnic groups in south Lebanon. Most of the south is Shi'ite, and the population of the security zone will be overwhelmingly Shi'ite — aproximately 150,000. Uri Lubrani, the coordinator of government operations in Lebanon, told *The New York Times*. "Israel hopes... to work out practical arrangements for allowing the Shi'ite Amal movement to gain indirect control of all the predominantly Shi'ite areas in southern Lebanon. Practical arrangements with the Shi'ites," said Lubrani, "seems to us to be the best way to transfer authority at present." The defence minister has made similar statements more than once.

**But such an approach does not jive with the decisive role Israel has assigned to the SLA in the security zone. For the SLA is predominantly Christian and under the command of a Christian general. Moreover, the residents of the south consider the SLA to be a legitimate target for attack. Thus, any agreement with Amal cannot but mean abandoning the SLA and letting it fall apart.**

The prime minister and the defence minister have repeatedly emphasised that Israel will not fight the battles of the Lebanese Christians. "We are returning to the 1975-76 policy," said Shimon Peres recently. "We will help the Christians to help themselves, but we won't fight on their behalf." On the ground things look a bit different. General Lahad is cooperating with Samir Ja'ja' — the commander of the Lebanese Forces (Phalange) — with Israel's silent approval.

Ja'ja has put his men at Lahad's disposal and Lahad has been recruiting them into the SLA. His plan is to create a Christian military organisation that can defend the Jezzin-Marjayoun corridor. By announcing that the Israeli army will step in to support the SLA if circumstances so require, Israel has obliged itself to defend parochial Christian interests in a Christian area that is being protected by Christian soldiers who receive their orders from Beirut-based [Phalange] commanders. The area in question, of course, is outside the security zone.

The support Israel has extended to General Lahad in the Jezzin area has made the Druze living in the Shouf very uneasy. They are worried about the possibility of a Christian army — operating under the wing of Israel — sprouting up and taking control of the southern approaches to the Shouf, which is predominantly Druze... Also, the Israeli army's support for the SLA has made a lot of Druze living in the Hazeiva region tense as regards the future.

**Senior sources in the army admitted that Israeli policy in south Lebanon can be described as confused and bewildered... (Translation: by Reuven Feldhauser, HaAretz, April 24, 1985)**

# Palestine and Culture

## The Eternal

by Um Fadasar

When they came
They littered the precious mountains
With ugly, sterile white boxes
Which they call home
They buried her under the concrete
Which tried with its weight to crush her

From deep beneath the ground
She cried out in Arabic:
When the land will throw off these chains
I shall rise up through the opening
Bursting out, into your midst

When they came
They polluted the winds of white
With words she could not understand
And cast her into oblivion
Which lifted her up on its wings

From high up in the heavens
She cried out in Arabic:
With the help of these wings
I will hover over you today
And onto you, I shall descend tomorrow

When they came
They stole her children in the Lebanon
And fed them to the fire of Ansar
Which sought to reduce her to ashes

From within the hearts of the burning prisoners
She cried out in Arabic:
On the energy of your flames I will thrive
So that I may carry my children
Down the long road of return

In anger and rage they tried to kill her
By knives in the hearts of the prisoners
Yet the ghost remained

Astonished, they asked for her identity
And she answered them in Arabic:
My number is four million and increasing
And thus I can never be silenced
For I am the voice of Palestine

*Um Fadasar is a pseudonym for a local Jerusalem woman who submitted this poem entitled "The Eternal" about Palestinian land and Israeli harassment in the occupied territories and Lebanon.*

## Rape in the Levant

by Um Fadasar

From a distance
They could see the essence of innocence
Glittering in the land of whiteness

In their envy, lust, and greed
They summoned the Devil for a meeting
And paid him to help in the blackening

On the fourth day
The promised gate arrived from Satan
And on the sixth day, they opened it

When the horrible storm came bursting through
The snow disappeared from the mountainsides
The sky and earth turned a dismal red

After endless nights of merciless pounding
All that remained was the faintest echo
Of the angel screaming in the distance

## In a Palestinian Village

by John Vargo

In a crumbling courtyard, half as old as dawn,
We're served sweet tea in glasses on a tray.
Shadows carve black sculptures on the dome
And elders chase the giggling girls away.

Worn village walls recall scenes from the past;
How thoughtless armies tramped where wheat was sown
And raging prophets threatened holy wrath.
Their names are faded scratchings on the stone.

In open fields we feast with just our hands,
Spiced chickens mounded on a nest of bread,
While peasant farmers, conquerors of the land,
Speak of crops and seeds, their children and their dead.

As armies clatter past their fields, they talk
And grasp the earth the way roots cling to rock.

*John Vargo, a student at Bir Zeit University living in Deir Ghasoun in the Tulkarm district, sent the following poem on village life to* Al Fajr.

by Samia Khalili

At night
I wait for daylight to come
To play with Sari.
In the day,
I wait for night
To sing for Sari,
To help him sleep in the moonlight.

*Poet Samia Khalili published a poem in the literary magazine* Al Fajr al-Adabi, *No. 55, on the occasion of the first anniversary of her son's birth. The following is an excerpt:*

# WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS

US Secretary of State George Shultz's visit to the area, the recent bombings in Jerusalem, and the fighting in Lebanon were the main stories in the local press this week.

Shultz's visit to the area and the continuing discussion of the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation was the main story in Palestinian papers. *Al Fajr* and *Al Sha'ab* dailies highlighted statements by PLO officials rejecting US proposals that try to bypass the PLO.

A series of explosions in West Jerusalem and other areas received front-page coverage. Local papers quoted Fatah statements taking credit for the bombing.

The ongoing civil war in Lebanon, including the fierce fighting in Beirut, was covered by local newspapers with news and photos.

## The Same Goods in Different Wrap

Shultz has decided to expand his visit to the region to include Amman and Cairo because he thinks the disagreement over the formation of the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation can be solved.

The US official spokesperson has declared the American administration's approval of Palestinian members to the delegation from within the PNC, provided they are not members of the PLO.

Hani al-Hassan was right when he said the Palestinian side in the Amman agreement agreed to Murphy's proposals. The public rejection of these proposals was part of a game to make the approval appear as if it were an achievement.

The question is, when was dependence on American imperialism an achievement for the Palestinian and Arab peoples? It is an achievement for American imperialism. And the American plans and policy will not gain any credibility even if a Palestinian side joins them.

The Palestinian people is interested in adhering to its rights to self-determination and to an independent state. By experience, the road to these rights does not go through Washington but through an international conference, the UN and Fez resolutions, the Soviet initiative, and the 16th PNC resolutions.

Therefore, those who bet on the American role will be disappointed because the Palestinian people and its friends do not see anything new in this "new move." It is only the same goods with new wrapping.

AL TALI'A
May 9

## A New American Tour

Shultz will start a tour in the area today. Two years have passed since his last tour. Does the US have a new position? Shultz's visit comes after Murphy's tour in the area. Though we don't know the details of Murphy's report to his superiors, we are aware that he conveyed a clear Palestinian position inside and outside the occupied territories, to the effect that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinian people. No solution is possible without PLO participation.

This position was emphasised by the Amman agreement. So, will Shultz keep on conveying conflicting attitudes from Tel Aviv to Amman to Cairo? Or will there be a shift in the American attitude? We don't expect a sudden change. But we expect the firm Arab stand to reap results.

AL FAJR
May 10

## Dealing With Facts

Shultz arrives in Jerusalem today on the first leg of a tour that includes Jordan and Egypt. We are sure that Murphy conveyed to Washington the Arab-Palestinian stand calling for PLO participation and Israel's rejection of the idea.

The US has to recognise the PLO and to start a dialogue with it, after the latter has tacitly accepted UN resolution 242 through signing the Amman agreement. The PLO has accepted all UN resolutions and was also a party to the Fez summit resolutions, which recognise the right of all states in the region to exist.

The US refusal to recognise the PLO is the major obstacle to peace efforts. The world has agreed that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinian people. More than 100 countries recognise the PLO as such.

AL QUDS
May 10

## The American Peace

The US keeps sending its envoys to the Middle East to give the impression that it is really interested in pushing the peace process forward. Some tend to view Shultz's visit in this context.

Nevertheless, it is clear to anyone that despite its many envoys to the area, the US is not serious in its pursuit of a political solution. The US cannot be serious unless the causes of it not being a neutral mediator are removed.

In other words, the US fully supports Israel in building its military strength to suppress our people. It also finances the Israeli settlement policy. America also denies the rights of our people and prevents them from exercising their right to self-determination.

It is true that only the US, being a faithful friend to Israel, can request it to respond to the call of reason and logic, but the US, for the same reason, loses its neutrality. Hence our insistence on an international conference. We call upon Shultz and his president, Reagan, to learn the lessons from history. Liberation movements eventually win.

So the US administration can shorten the way by recognising the PLO and holding a dialogue with it. Shultz stated before his arrival in Israel that Palestinian participation is essential for any durable settlement.

We demand that Mr Shultz go a step further and say that PLO participation is essential. The talk about participation of "Palestinians" is different, in our opinion, from the participation of the "PLO." We insist that the latter formula is the only one acceptable to our people. Will the Reagan administration understand that?

AL FAJR
May 11

## The Aims of Shultz's Tour

Shultz, who started his tour of the area yesterday, was careful to express absolute support for Israel. Prior to his arrival in Israel, Shultz pointed out that he would discuss the issue of forming a Palestinian-Jordanian delegation.

Shultz's statements indicate that Washington did not understand the significance of Murphy's failure. The US is still determined to go ahead with its efforts to strike the unity of Palestinian representation and national Palestinian rights. Such attempts were rejected by the PLO leadership. In the face of this Palestinian adamancy, Shultz's mission will end in failure, unless the US realises that there is no way to bypass the PLO.

AL SHA'AB
May 11

## Soon Dust Will Settle

As Shultz continues his tour, his aides also continue to hint at the participation of Palestinians in a joint delegation. And Israel continues to reject proposals, adding its own description of the Palestinians it accepts to sit down with.

Meanwhile, hostile forces try to create confusion. The issue is not that of a joint delegation. The fundamental issue is the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to an independent state, something which the US and Israel continue to reject.

The basic issue also is the role of the PLO, which cannot be bypassed. We are sure the dust raised by the Shultz visit will settle down within days. And all will find themselves once more faced with a reality that cannot be bypassed.

AL SHA'AB
May 13

## New Concessions?

Shultz pointed to some progress in what he calls the peace process. This means that the Palestinian Right has made more concessions, which are well-known to our people.

The Shultz mission still faces some procedural problems before starting direct negotiations between a Jordanian-Arafat delegation and Israel on the basis of the Amman agreement and Mubarak's initiative, which lead to Camp David. In view of this, efforts should be made to bring down this deviationist approach.

AL MITHAQ
May 14

# Resident Offers Kidney for Sale In Return for Sight

A West Bank resident is offering to sacrifice one of his kidneys in order to regain his sight. Khaled Abd al-Latif Ikmail, 33, from Qabatya in the Jenin district, wants to sell his kidney in order to pay for an expensive operation that can restore his sight. Ikmail made the decision after all his attempts to get charitable organisations to pay for the operation failed.

Ikmail's sight was hampered when he was five years old due to a blood clot in his brain that restricts his sight. He can see only light. He thinks it was caused by measles; doctors say he must have experienced emotional trauma. At the age of seven, Ikmail sought help at St. John's Ophthalmic Hospital in Jerusalem, but they could do nothing. Ikmail says that his left eye was permanently damaged at the time.

Despite his blindness, Ikmail finished high school at the Lutheran school in Beit Hanina and went to university in Egypt. In 1975, he received a BA in Arabic from the University of Cairo. Upon his return to the West Bank an Israeli doctor at a hospital in Nahariya told him his blindness could be corrected, but he would not perform the necessary operation. Ikmail then returned to Egypt and went to the Eye Palace hospital for treatment. The expenses of the trip had been collected through a publicity campaign via *Al Ittihad* and *Al Quds* Arabic dailies and a number of foreign journals. The Egyptians confirmed that his eye disease could be healed but recommended that he return again for further testing.

In 1984 Ikmail returned to Egypt and, after testing, an Egyptian ophthalmologist told him that he had two ways to be healed: by surgery, in order to remove the blood clot in his brain that causes the blindness, or by laser treatment. Ikmail said the Egyptian doctor told him that the surgery is extremely risky and could possibly result in mental impairment or even death. Laser treatment could be done in the US, he was told.

Contacts between Egyptian and American medical officials produced an agreement and an opportunity: Ikmail was told he could go to a Los Angeles hospital for laser treatment. The trip, medical expenses and a return trip to Egypt for follow-up treatment would cost US$20,000.

Ikmail had obtained PLO approval for funds to travel to the Soviet Union for treatment, but an arrest and a two-year prison term in 1979 made him afraid to accept the money, or indeed to have any further contacts with the PLO. He told *Al Fajr* that he soon found out that most hospitals and charitable institutes would only help someone who had connections with influential people, which left Ikmail out in the cold.

In desperation, Ikmail considered drastic measures. He consulted a Jenin doctor who assured him that it is possible to live on a single kidney.

Ikmail then decided to sell one kidney in order to pay for the eye operation. "I am healthy and I prefer to live with one kidney and have my sight rather than be blind and have two kidneys," he said. He told *Al Fajr* that an artificial kidney is worth US$12,000, so a live kidney should be worth much more.

Although Ikmail prefers that the kidney transplant take place somewhere in the Middle East, he is willing to travel anywhere in the world. He says that his ailing father is unable to support the seven-member family, so they are dependent on the salary of an 18-year-old brother, Suleiman, who works in a local quarry. Ikmail currently does not work, but he says that if he regains his sight, he would like to find a teaching job.

Scene from Nablus as published in Waiting for the Dawn

# New Swedish Book on Palestine

A number of Swedish organisations published, in April 1985, a new book on the Palestinian problem called *Waiting for the Dawn*. The 86-page book, in Swedish, includes vivid black and white photos of life under occupation in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Lebanon by photographer Micke Berg.

The book was published as a result of cooperation between the Christian Committee for Palestine and the Palestine Group in Sweden. It includes articles about the situation of Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Israel. A poem by Samih al-Qassem and an article by Ibrahim Matar are the only Palestinian contributions in the glossy book.

Goran Gunner, one of the editors of the book who is visiting the area, told *Al Fajr* that "the book is intended to show an up-to-date situation of the Palestinian people." Gunner said that keeping the Swedish people informed and aware about the Palestinian problem is of grave importance. Gunner said that the cooperation between groups on the book's publication is a positive element.

**May 17, 18, 19**

**Exhibit:** "The Second Charitable Bazaar Exhibit," sponsored by the Bethlehem Arab Society for the Physically Handicapped. Opposite Old Karitas building, Bethlehem. 10:00 am till 5:00 pm.

**May 17**

**Theatre:** "A Chosen Neighborhood," by Al Jawal Theatre Company, at the Nuzha/el-Hakawati Theatre, Jerusalem, 7:00 pm, IS1000. Tel: 288189.

**May 18**

**Folklore:** "An Evening of Folklore and Music," by the Mount of Olives Group, at the Nuzha/el-Hakawati Theatre, 4:00 and 7:00 pm. Tel: 288189.

**May 19**

**Film:** "The Soldier's Father," directed by Timor Mikadzeb, at the Nuzha/el-Hakawati Theatre, 7:30 pm. Tel: 288189 (Russian with Arabic subtitles)

**May 23**

**Music:** "Bach Organ Festival," at the Church of the Redeemer, Jerusalem, 8:30 pm. Tel: 282543.

# Strike

*continued from page 1*

representing government school teachers.

In a communique to its members, the GCGST said the General Committee met May 10 to evaluate the strike and found that it was successful. It also reprimanded "a group of teachers who deviated from our line and stood against all the teachers" when they failed to participate in the strike. The communication also condemned certain unnamed heads of education departments who questioned some of the members of GCGST "and threatened them in order to force them to change their positions."

As a result of the strike, one member of GCGST Fadi Rimawi, was arrested and is currently being held in detention by the Israelis, a GCGST statement said, May 14. Many other teachers were summoned and interrogated by Israeli military officers in their districts or served with written warnings according to the statement.

As for further protest steps, the GCGST has several options: to strike for a full day; to refuse to give students final exams; and to refuse to grade *tawjihi* exams.

# Prisoners

*continued from page 1*

Latif, reported that one of their prisonmates, named Jamal, was beaten so hard they were able to hear him screaming. The prisoners started yelling at the jailers to stop but the jailers threw tear gas into the cells and continued their beating.

The detainees, who have been rounded up during the past two months on various political charges, reported that they showed a Red Cross representative marks of beating on their bodies as well as linen burnt by tear gas canisters.

Tulkarm detention centre was shut down several years ago following protests by prisoners and human rights groups on its inhuman conditions. It was, however, reopened earlier this year reportedly after improvements were introduced. Like Fara'a, it is currently serving as a detention centre which prisoners call the "second Ansar," in reference to the notorious detention centre in south Lebanon.

Twenty people from the Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University and Dheisheh Camp demonstrated outside Tulkarm prison May 11 demanding the release of journalist Hamdi Farraj, a Dheisheh Camp resident. Farraj was arrested February 1 and has been in detention since then. Several other Dheisheh residents were also arrested in February but most have since been released.

Israeli soldiers ordered the group to leave the premises, which they did after 30 minutes of protest. No arrests or incidents were reported. (Translation: Al Ittihad, May 13, 1985; Al Mithaq, May 13, 1985)

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Arab Council for Public Affairs
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P.O. Box 19839, Jerusalem

# WEEKLY REVIEW

An exhibition of locally produced goods was held at Bir Zeit University during the celebration of Palestine Week. /AO photo

May 8, 1985

## CURFEW LIFTED

A curfew imposed May 7 by Israeli military authorities on the Aqbat Jabr refugee camp near Jericho was lifted. The curfew was imposed after an Israeli bus was stoned as it passed near the camp. A woman passenger was reported to be slightly injured when a stone shattered one of the bus windows.

A curfew imposed on Balata refugee camp was also lifted. The curfew was imposed on the Nablus camp on May 7 after local youths removed a cement barrier set up by the authorities at one of the camp entrances.

## NEW MEASURES AGAINST SUMMER VISITORS

Visitors wishing to enter the occupied territories via the Jordan bridges this summer will be turned away by Israeli authorities unless a period of six months has passed since their last visit.

## *ISRAELIS UNCOVER* 'ARMED ORGANISATIONS'

Israeli military authorities say they have discovered several armed organisations whose members are reported to have carried out a series of attacks in the Jenin, Tulkarm, and Hebron areas.

Dozens of youths suspected of taking part in these attacks have been detained, it was reported. Israel Radio said the youths have allegedly admitted to carrying out five petrol-bomb attacks on Israeli vehicles, a tourist bus, and an army position in the centre of Hebron.

The youths have also confessed, according to Israel Radio, to similar attacks on the Israeli military headquarters in Jenin, an Israeli Egged bus in Tulkarm, and an Israeli Dan bus in Qalqilya.

## BUS STONED OUTSIDE AL-BIREH

An Israeli bus was stoned on the outskirts of al-Bireh, but no damages or injuries were reported, according to police. The passengers got off the bus and chased the attackers, catching only one of them, who was handed over to the authorities.

## CATTLE SEIZED FOR GRAZING ON 'MILITARY LAND'

More than 500 head of cattle were seized by Israeli authorities south of Yatta village in the Hebron district on the pretext that the cattle were grazing on "military land." The authorities later released the cattle after imposing a fine of JD5 for each head.

## JERICHO BOOK FAIR

Hundreds of women from Jericho and other West Bank cities and towns visited the Islamic Book Fair in Jericho. On display at the fair were Islamic books and dresses, handmade items, and manuscripts of the Quran.

## ISRAELI CRACKDOWN ON VENDORS IN AL-BIREH

Fruit vendors in the al-Bireh market were ordered by Israeli police and soldiers to leave the area. No reasons were given for this measure.

## HEBRON PUPIL JAILED FOR 10-YEAR-OLD CHARGE

The Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced Mohammed Badawi Ni'man Idris of Hebron to two months in jail on charges of throwing stones in 1975. Idris was later released on IS300,000 bail.

May 9, 1985

## BEIT JALA MAYOR MEETS VISITING GERMAN DELEGATION

Beit Jala mayor Farah al-A'araj received a German delegation of 26 and briefed them on the situation in the region. A'araj stressed in the meeting the importance of including the PLO in any negotiations on the Palestinian cause.

## CUSTOMS RAID ON MONEYCHANGERS

Israeli customs officials raided moneychangers' stores in Ramallah and al-Bireh and confiscated foreign currency found in a number of the stores.

## 2 WOMEN JAILED FOR MEMBERSHIP

Two women from Tubas, Fayzeh al-Haj Yasin Amru, and Hiam Yahya Mohammed Abu Mutawi, were sentenced by the Israeli military court in Nablus to one year in prison and one year suspended. The two were charged with membership in a Palestinian organisation.

## CRM MEMBERS IDENTIFY WITH HOSPICE

Three members of Knesset from the Israeli Citizens' Rights Movement (CRM) visited the Hospice Hospital in the Old City of Jerusalem and met with the hospital officials who briefed them on the authorities' attempts to close the Hospice. The CRM members promised to bring up the issue for discussion in the Knesset.

## 3 YOUTHS SENTENCED

The Israeli military court in Nablus sentenced three West Bank youths to jail and suspended sentences for security offences. Younis Abu Sbieh of Hebron was sentenced to six months in prison and a similar suspended sentence on charges of stone-throwing and demonstrating; Majed Zahran of Jenin to one month in prison and four months suspended; and Adnan Abd al-Fattah to 18 days in prison and a IS75,000 fine.

May 10, 1985

## FREIJ RETURNS FROM AMMAN

Elias Freij returned from Amman, where he met with a number of Jordanian officials including Zaid al-Rifa'i, the prime minister.

## BEIT JALA GROCERY STORES RAIDED

Customs officers raided a number of grocery stores in Beit Jala. The owners will be tried before a military court for not posting prices on goods.

## QALQILYA AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SOCIETY GETS SURPRISE CUSTOMS VISIT

Customs officers raided the office of the Agricultural Marketing Society in Qalqilya. They confiscated the society's account books and summoned al-Haj Ziad al-Younis, head of the society, and the auditor to appear at the customs office in Tulkarm.

## 'YOUNG MUSLIM SOCIETY' BANNED IN HEBRON

The Israeli administrative governor in Hebron asked those in charge of the Young Muslim Society in Hebron to stop all the activities of the society as of Thursday, May 9.

## JAILED FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Israeli military court in Ramallah sentenced Ghazi Id al-Na'san to one year in prison and two years suspended for membership in a Palestinian organisation.

Karim Khalaf's widow and two daughters mourn the loss of their husband and father at a memorial at the Chamber of Commerce in Jerusalem 40 days after the Ramallah mayor's death.

### JABALYA YOUTHS JAILED

The Israeli military court in Gaza sentenced 24-year old Abdullah Mahmoud al-Kafarneh, of Jabalya camp, to two years in prison and one year suspended for membership in in a Palestinian organisation and for recruiting others to join it.

May 12, 1985

### STRIKING TEACHERS INTERROGATED

A number of government school teachers who took part in a warning strike in the West Bank last week have been summoned by the Israeli military authorities for questioning. The teachers were asked about their social and professional status. It was learned that other teachers will be questioned today on the same issue.

### KAHANE BANNED FROM GALILEE VILLAGE

MK Meir Kahane, the anti-Arab racist rabbi, was prevented from entering the Galilee village of Mi'lya. Residents of the village gathered at the village entrance and prevented Kahane from approaching. A senior Israeli police officer ordered him to leave the scene.

### BUS STONED IN JERUSALEM

An Israeli Egged bus was stoned and a passenger slightly injured near Lion's Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem. This is the tenth attack on an Israeli bus in Jerusalem in one month.

### UNIONIST TOWN-ARREST EXTENDED

Israeli authorities extended a town-arrest order imposed on Jerusalem unionist Majed al-Labadi for another six months.

May 13, 1985

### TRAVEL BAN ON JERUSALEM RESIDENTS

Israeli military authorities prohibited residents of Jerusalem from crossing the bridges to Jordan. The travel ban is believed to be connected to a series of explosions in West Jerusalem on Sunday.

### JERICHO MAYOR TO JORDAN

Jericho Mayor Jamil Sabri Khalaf left for Amman on a two-day visit to deposit a large sum of money donated to his municipality by the Emir of al-Sharqa in the bank.

### GAZA NOTABLE FORBIDDEN TO GO TO JORDAN

The Israeli authorities notified Haj Hashem Atta al-Shawwa, head of the Citrus Producers' Union in Gaza, that his request to travel to Jordan has been rejected. Shawwa planned to visit Amman to discuss a number of economic issues with Jordanian officials.

### NEW CENTRE

The Patient's Friends Society in Bethlehem celebrated the opening of its new centre in the city. The new centre includes a dental and X-ray clinic, an emergency room, and a laboratory.

### 2 BEIT SAHOUR MEN JAILED, FINED

Khaled Danoun and Samer Mohammed al-Hurani, both from Beit Sahour, were each sentenced to nine months in jail, five years suspended and a IS100,000 fine by the Israeli military court in Nablus on security charges.

### TOWN ARREST FOR NAJAH STUDENT

Ghassan Atili, a fourth-year student in political science at al-Najah University in Nablus, was handed a six-month town-arrest order by the authorities. Atili, a resident of the village of Atil near Tulkarm, will now be unable to travel to Nablus to complete his studies.

### 2 MUKHTARS WOUNDED

A petrol bomb was thrown at a cafe in the village of Tammoun, southeast of Jenin. Two of the village *mukhtars* who were sitting in the cafe were injured.

### BULLDOZERS DESTROY LAND

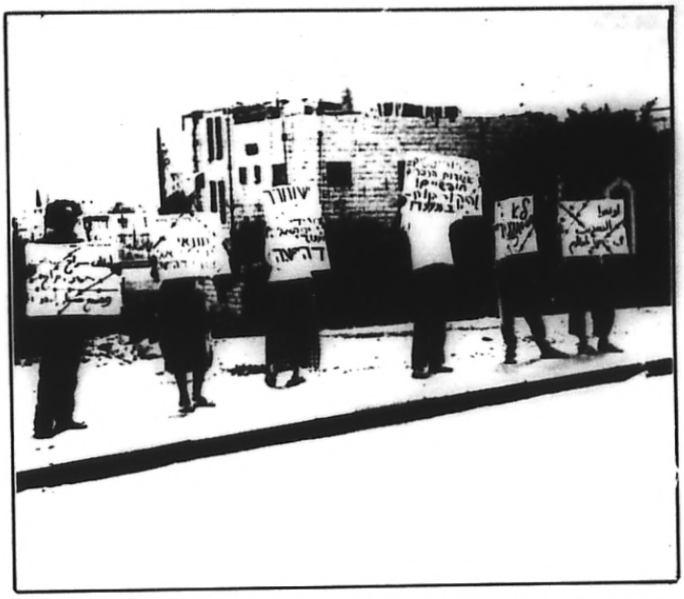
Israeli bulldozers accompanied by a number of armed Israeli soldiers entered land owned by Yousef Abd al-Karim Jaber in the village of Siniria near Jerusalem and destroyed the crops cultivated on the land.

### DHEISHEH BOY RELEASED

After 82 days in detention, the Israeli military court in Nablus ordered the release of a 14-year-old boy from Dheisheh camp who was being held for unspecified security offenses. The boy, Hisham Khalil Abu Laban, has denied all charges pressed against him.

### HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

The Palestinian Women's Committee in al-Azzeh refugee camp in the Bethlehem district organised a health symposium on first-aid treatment. Chief speaker at the symposium, which was attended by dozens of women from the camp, was nurse Iman Qumsiyeh.



Arab and Jewish demonstrators outside Tulkarm prison protest deteriorating conditions in the prison and demand the release of the Dheisheh camp detainees.

### 2 GAZANS SENTENCED

The Israeli military court in Gaza sentenced detainees Munir al-Hilu and Younis al-Ajrami to two years in prison and a similar suspended sentence on charges of attacking a prisoner and injuring him. Al-Ajrami is already serving a life sentence for security charges.

### SMALLPOX IN NUSSEIRAT

An epidemic of smallpox has broken out in Nusseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip and is spreading quickly among the camp resjdents.

The residents appealed to the health personnel and to UNRWA to take protective measures.

May 14, 1985

### JORDAN PUTS NEW MEASURES INTO EFFECT

A series of new measures to facilitate West Bankers' movement across the bridges to Jordan went into effect. Students will be allowed to continue their university studies only if they prove that they passed the *tawjihi* exam. West Bank students were previously not allowed to enter the East Bank to study in Jordanian universities and colleges. After receiving their *tawjihi* certificate, students will now be permitted to stay in Jordan for a whole year, Minister of State Jawdeh said.

He said 256 West Bank teachers have been employed by the Jordanian Ministry of Education without having to do military service.

### WOMEN'S BAZAAR

The head of the Young Women's Muslim Association (YWMA) in Jerusalem, Mrs Nuzhah Nusseibeh, opened the associaton's third charitable bazaar. On display at the bazaar are clothes, hand-work items, national products, and a wall magazine.

### HAND GRENADE IN KHAN YOUNIS

A hand grenade was thrown at an Israeli army patrol in Khan Younis, in the Gaza Strip. Israel Radio reported no injuries, but said Israeli army troops combed the area searching for the attackers.

### HERITAGE EXHIBITION

A Palestinian popular heritage exhibition was opened at the humanities faculty in the Jerusalem University yesterday. On display are books, pottery, paintings, and traditional clothes.

### BOYS' SCHOOL IN HEBRON APPROVED

The Israeli authorities have agreed to a request from the director of education in the Hebron district, Mohammed Rashed al-Ja'bari, to build a new boys' school in Hebron.

### GAZANS JAILED FOR LEAFLETS

The Israeli military court in Gaza sentenced Nufal al-Ghol and Azmi Jarareh, both from Gaza, to eight months in prison and a IS100,000 fine each on charges of handing out leaflets.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# What Every 'Fact-Finding' Mission Should Know

by Daoud Kuttab

As the temperature rises, visitors flock to this area — regular tourists, pilgrims, and would-be "fact-finders" as well. Delegations, committees, groups of politicians, journalists, academicians, and church or synagogue members arrive here to assess the political situation and to find out "The Truth." Such visits are not new to Palestinians. Palestinians have always welcomed such visitors and have shown remarkable candour with them, although at times the motives of some groups are questionable.

Many of the visitors are genuinely interested in meeting with Palestinians to find out about their problems and aspirations. However, visits to the area are not always successful, either for the visiting groups or for the Palestinians who sponsor these groups and meet with them. Why not?

Several Palestinians who often have to meet and direct foreign delegations

HUSSEINI: DELEGATIONS ARE NOT SESITIVE TO THE PROFESSIONAL AND PRIVAT LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS THEY SEEK TO HEAR FROM.....

were interviewed about problems that frequently arise with such visits. They cite the need for visiting groups or delegations to decide on their purpose and what they hope to accomplish before coming. Ibrahim Dakkak, head of the West Bank Engineers Union and a popular speaker to such groups, says that some delegations coming to the occupied territories are interested in facts and figures, while others want to hear Palestinian opinions on current political developments. "If the visiting groups explain specifically what their purpose is, we can be much more successful in providing them with the information and opinions they are looking for," Dakkak said. "Otherwise we might spend a lot of time explaining things that the group either already knows or isn't interested in," he added. Dakkak, who also heads a Jerusalem-based think tank called the Arab Thought Forum, normally gives visiting groups a short presentation and then fields questions in order to touch on the subjects the groups are most interested in. Dakkak listed purposes of groups as: ideological (supporters or opponents); pragmatic (who want to find solutions today); charitable (pity Palestinians because they are oppressed); and communication-related (interested in Arab-Jewish dialogue).

## Coordination

Having set a focus, the next step is to appoint a local coordinator to plan the visits required to fulfil the delegation's aims. This should be done about a month in advance. Albert Aghazarian, director of Public Relations at Bir Zeit University who often coordinates visits for academics and other interested parties, warns about the dangers of appointing more than one coordinator. Aghazarian related that a number of groups who visited the occupied territories recently contacted several coordinators, and appointments were either made twice or not at all. For example, one church group wanted to meet heads of local churches during Easter week, when they were very busy with festivals and church services.

Coordination often has had to be improvised on an *ad hoc* basis by inexperienced people who don't have the time for such responsibilities. Without a national government or a centralised tourist information office, foreign delegations often have to depend on contacts or on Palestinian personalities they know — well or only indirectly — who are usually quite busy. There are no professional, full-time coordinators, and this can often lead to foul-ups. For example, one group travelled all the way from Jerusalem to Nazareth to meet Mayor Tawfiq Zayyad, and it turned out that Zayyad was at the Knesset in Jerusalem the same day. Another group tried the impossible feat of visiting the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights the same day.

A number of local Palestinians have tried to establish a coordinating body, but so far have not succeeded. The latest proposal to start such coordination came from the recently established Arab Council for Public Affairs in Jerusalem, but so far it has not been implemented.

A major complaint voiced by Palestinian personalities is that visiting delegations all too often spend six out of their seven days in the country listening to Israeli leaders and visiting Israeli institutions, and then they spend only the last day or even the last evening talking to Palestinians.

Palestinians in the occupied territories are split on how to handle invitations to speak to such groups, who are often Zionists on a visit paid for by the Israeli government. Some say that as long as one can speak openly without censorship, we should take advantage of these opportunities. Others argue that such groups are inherently biased and only want to be able to claim they have heard both sides. "We should not give them the pleasure of giving their peers at home a distorted picture of the situation while claiming to be objective," says Aghazarian. Faisal Husseini, head of the Arab Studies Centre in Jerusalem, says that Palestinians should be prepared with pamphlets, videos, and booklets which can be given to visitors to take home. Husseini says that if invited to address such a group, he would not shy away from scolding it for not being evenhanded, unless their one-sided visit here is only the first stop and a tour of Arab countries and meetings with PLO representatives comes next. "As long as the Palestinian side gets equal time with the Israelis, then it is OK," said Husseini.

Such an evenhanded approach is also advised for choosing Palestinian speakers. Dakkak suggests that groups visit representatives of the widest spectrum of Palestinians. "I suggest that they visit Freij and Shawwa as well as Shaka'a and Tawil," explained Dakkak. Dakkak feels that exposing groups to only one Palestinian political view would be misleading and incomplete.

## New Blood Needed

The same Palestinian personalities are repeatedly sought after to speak to visiting groups. This burden is usually placed on the busiest individuals — mayors, unionists, academicians, and journalists. Faisal Husseini suggests introducing changes to the standard lists. "Change would provide new blood and new vitality for visiting groups and for Palestinian speakers," said Husseini. As a way of putting this into practice, Husseini usually asks a number of his assistants to attend meetings he has with foreign delegations. "I often feel that I have become a record, repeating the same things over and over without the enthusiasm of the earlier times." Husseini understands that foreign groups are not aware of the existence of many other individuals who are eloquent in explaining the situation. He feels that Palestinians have to keep suggesting new names and introducing new faces. "This way you can give them a chance and develop new leaders," he said.

Albert Aghazarian feels that at times change is difficult and entails a certain risk. "Whenever we have a visiting group I feel that we have a gun with one shot, and we either hit or miss." Aghazarian says that this fear of missing often forces him to assign reliable spokespeople who have experience. Husseini, on the other hand, feels that a central coordinating body could properly train younger, less experienced Palestinians and give them an opportunity to try. He feels that many times "unknowns" appear more credible to visiting groups than well-known politicians who have to weigh every word they say.

## 'Thank You' Would Be Nice

Meeting visiting groups often takes a heavy toll on private lives and finances of Palestinian figures. Families and businesses are the most affected. Faisal Husseini says that often Palestinians who have become well-known because of the institutions they have established neglect their institutions in order to speak to visitors. Most delegations are not sensitive to such matters and usually don't offer any remuneration for long speeches. Even thank-you notes for time spent are rarely sent.

Among the most important criticism raised by many Palestinian leaders on the subject of visits to the area is the fact that most groups who come and spend time here never follow up their visits by sending feedback about the visit. "Knowing what the group has done after it returned from the visit is very important to us," said Dakkak. Dakkak cites an example of an interview he gave to a South African journalist. "When I received the clipping it was completely anti-Arab and pro-Israel," he said. "But at least he sent me the clipping. If we receive any kind of correspondence or news clippings, we can determine whether the group's visit was a success or a failure," he explained. Husseini says that such feedback helps him understand which points made were absorbed and which were not. "I often feel that a point I wanted to make came across but later I find out that the audience didn't understand it."

DAKKAK: KNOWING WHAT THE GROUP HAS DONE AFTER IT RETURNED FROM A VISIT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US...

Others said that such feedback is important because it gives people a moral boost. Jawdat Mana'a of the Bethlehem Press Office says that Dheisheh residents feel emotionally stronger when they know that someone outside cares about their plight and has actually done something.

Feedback is also important in planning for future delegations. "When we realise what interested particular groups, then we can plan future visits more intelligently," said Husseini.

As concerned groups all over the world start packing their bags for visits to the area to find out about the Palestinian problem, their prospective hosts advise them to plan ahead, choose a coordinator, pinpoint their focus, diversify their contacts and, after hearing from Palestinians, to return and do something about what they have learned. Palestinians living under occupation strongly value the opportunity to express their views and discuss their problems. ■